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A PORTRAIT OF A COLLECTOR: HARRY F. R. DOLAN, JOSEPH EVERETT
CHANDLER AND THE DUNSTABLE FARMS PROJECT

Anne M. Lingeman

A THESIS

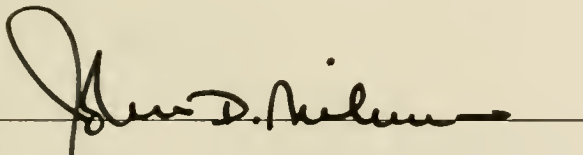
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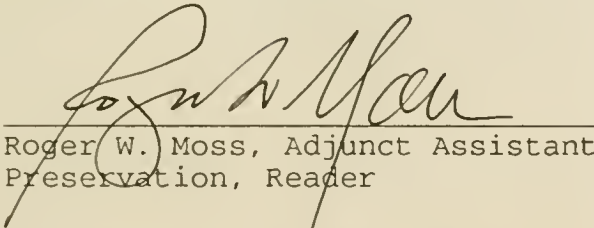
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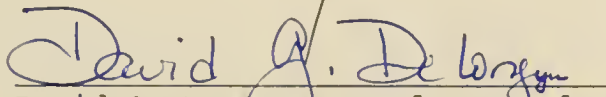
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Introduction

In 1918 Harry F. R. Dolan purchased a farmhouse on one hundred and forty-four acres in Dunstable, Massachusetts. In 1921 Dolan hired Joseph Everett Chandler, a well-known Boston architect, to remodel the farmhouse and landscape the surrounding grounds. At this time Dolan named the site Dunstable Farms.

Joseph Everett Chandler recorded his thoughts on colonial architecture and restoration in his 1914 book, *The Colonial House*. His work on Dunstable Farms strongly followed his written philosophies. Elizabeth Dolan, Harry F. R. Dolan's daughter, was a teenager at the time of Chandler's remodeling. Presently Elizabeth Dolan lives in New York City. She has been an invaluable resource in recalling her father's collecting and Chandler's architectural alterations. Photographs exist of the exterior and interior of the house before and after the remodeling. Copies of thirty one Chandler drawings for the site also survive. These five crucial sources were used to document the changes which occurred between 1921 and 1931 at Dunstable Farms. After examining the characteristics of this particular remodeling, it will be suggested that the Dunstable Farms project well illustrates the prominence and underlying philosophy of the colonial revival movement in the 1920s.

The Romance of the New England Farmhouse and Country Living during the Colonial Revival

In 1858 Nathan Henry Chamberlain wrote that in the "many silent villages amongst the New England hills" the old colonial mansions are "fit... for sleep and dreams, while the great world wakes and works so feverishly."¹ Although Dunstable, Massachusetts, lies only thirty five miles northwest of Boston, to this day it is "a silent village." The town embodies many characteristics of the "New England picturesque" which includes: a large town common, a white congregational church, a volunteer fire department, an abundance of stone walls, family graves hidden in the hills, multiple eighteenth-century farmhouses resting on acres of cleared farm land, large red barns, and - until recently - elm shaded streets. Interestingly it has remained a rural village with its history fairly benign. In the introduction to *Dunstable Village*, Curtis H. Gates wrote that his history contained no accounts of "the wealthy and powerful; cowboys, Indians, inventors, or madmen; earthquakes, riots or local revolutions."² The village of Dunstable, he wrote, "took note of world events and went on its own quiet way, relatively unchanged."³ During the colonial revival era small, stable and secure New England villages such as Dunstable became symbols of a purer age. Communities like Dunstable were viewed by residents and outsiders as havens of

¹William B. Rhoads, *The Colonial Revival* (New York: Garland Pub., 1977) 395.

²Curtis H. Gates, *Dunstable Village* (Dunstable, MA: Town of Dunstable, 1973) 7.

³*ibid.*

democracy, order, balance and prosperity.

The colonial revival spirit began early in Dunstable, Massachusetts. In 1846 Charles J. Fox published *A History of the Old Township of Dunstable*, which presented a detailed history of the early settlers and praised their heroic endeavors.⁴ History was also revived in the 1873 community celebration of the town's two hundred year anniversary. The bicentennial festivities focused primarily on the beauty of the town, its founders and revolutionary heroes. The day began with a processional march to the common where "flags were flying in every direction."⁵ On the common an audience of three thousand listened to "historical" orations, songs, toasts, and poems praising the town of Dunstable.⁶

In honor of the bicentennial event, the Reverend Elias A. Nason wrote *A History of the Town of Dunstable, Massachusetts*. He listed the descendants of the town founders, revolutionary soldiers, and recognized their old family homesteads. His history presented interesting anecdotes of the lives of town residents as well as listed all known Dunstable births, marriages and deaths. Most importantly Nason attempted to characterize the present townspeople and their idyllic surroundings. He wrote, "The citizens of Dunstable are industrious, frugal, and temperate. They are noted for their republican simplicity, well cultivated farms, pleasant homesteads, and ample barns...."

⁴Charles J. Fox, *History of the Old Township of Dunstable* (Nashua, NH: Charles T. Gill, 1846).

⁵Elias A. Nason, *A History of the Town of Dunstable* (Boston: Alfred Mudge and Son, 1877) 203.

⁶*Ibid.*

The town is out of debt, and in respect to good order, friendliness, equality, and fraternity is a most desirable place of residence."⁷ He noted that most of the residents were farmers who occupied "to a large extent the lands laid out," who enjoyed "the fruit of the orchards planted by the hands of their forefathers." He also wrote that "many families can trace their lineage back to the original settlers and in some instances live in the houses which they built."⁸

At the bicentennial celebration residents expressed, in different ways, their shared fear of change. Mary Rockwell's poem, "Dunstable," suggests the grim threats of industrialization and intrusion:

On thy smooth brow is written early life,
untrodden yet the paths of vice and strife.
But changes soon will come, thy peace to mar;
E'en now is heard the rattling railroad car
Along thy wood where quiet reigned around,
And the lone night-bird's song the loudest sound,
Till the last year of two long centuries past
Proclaimed by engine, "men were going fast."⁹

At the event George S. Boutwell declared in a toast that "the larger cities and municipalities are absorbing and corrupt."¹⁰ In his oration E. Rockwell Hoar lamented that many Dunstable citizens were deserting their native town. He wrote, that today's Dunstable

seemed like the old mother sitting in advanced age by her hearth-stone, her family reduced in numbers by its contributions to other neighborhoods and places, her daughters changing their names as they

⁷Ibid., 173.

⁸Ibid., 72.

⁹Ibid., 206.

¹⁰Ibid., 210.

form new alliances, but welcoming to the old home-
stead and to the thanksgiving table her numerous
progeny." ¹¹

Henry James expressed similar concerns in *The American Scene*; he noted on his travels through the New England countryside an unsettling exodus from the farms. "The history was there in degree," he wrote, "and one came upon it, on sunny afternoons in the form of the classic abandoned farm of the rude forefather who had lost patience with his fate."¹²

President Theodore Roosevelt established the Country Life Commission in 1908 to fight the farmers' flight into the industrialized cities of America. Roosevelt reformers believed that "something precious and vital to America's survival would be lost if the nation's small towns and farms were allowed to disappear."¹³ The chairman of the commission, Liberty Hyde Bailey, praised farmers and called them the "land people."¹⁴ To Bailey "farming represented a simplicity and a closeness to nature that was ennobling; cities were parasitic, battenning on the blood of the country's young people."¹⁵ Although many conservatives opposed the legislation purposed by Roosevelt's progressive Country Life Movement, the ideologies of the commission served to romanticize the American farm.

Many writers during the later part of the nineteenth

¹¹*Ibid.*, 209.

¹²Henry James, *The American Scene* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1968) 14.

¹³Richard Lingeman, *Small Town America* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co, 1980) 329.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, 329.

¹⁵*Ibid.*

century proclaimed the countryside America's eden. Farmer's and their surroundings were heavily sentimentalized. Sherwood Anderson praised the young New England farmers who he wrote "came first glad of the rich free soil." He believed these farmers wisely created towns in a fashion which was "slow and measured... A slow culture growing up...growing as culture must always grow- through the hands of a workman."¹⁶ The farmer's small town surroundings were also glorified in many writings. In *America as Civilization* Max Lerner recently wrote that there is "a feeling that by the fact of being small, the small town escapes the corruption of life in the city and the dominant contagions that infest the more glittering places."¹⁷

Like Dunstable's Bicentennial Celebration, Sanitary and Centennial Fairs in the second half of the nineteenth century promoted patriotism and idealized country life. The Philadelphia Centennial of 1876 featured a "New England Farmer's home" exhibit.¹⁸ Articles in such popular periodicals as *House and Garden*, *House Beautiful*, and *Country Life in America* also advocated country living.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, the improvement of country roads and popularity of the automobile eased travel from the city to rural areas. Elizabeth Stillinger commented in *The Antiquers* that,

In the summertime, well-to-do city dwellers could leave the crowded, steaming streets for shady, peaceful country lanes; the contrast provoked a longing for earlier days and customs.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 338.

¹⁷Lingeman, 8.

¹⁸Alan Axelrod, ed., *The Colonial Revival in America* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1985) 174.

The great anonymity of the city blurred the neat sense of identity that seemingly remained intact in New England towns. An urban visitor felt that here, among fine old houses and furnishings, was a reassuring sense of stability and order."¹⁹

In 1923 Wallace Nutting wrote in *Massachusetts Beautiful*, "A farm for one who has been a city dweller does much to take the conceit out of him, and to give him back health. He sleeps well and inevitably becomes bucolic."²⁰ In a similar statement Joseph Everett Chandler noted that a man could be quenched by "the lighting of the candles and the climbing of steep stairs hugging the big central chimney, to the simplest, cleanest, most sleep-inviting chamber imaginable, ... lost almost immediately to view by the overpowering urge for sleep of a healthily exhausted body."²¹

In 1915 Mary Northend, who had written several articles for *House Beautiful*, published *Remodeled Farmhouses*. Her book essentially stylized an approach to purchasing, decorating, and living in a farmhouse. As if the farmhouse were an empty slate full of profound potential, she wrote: "As you drove slowly along the country road, did you ever stop to consider the many possibilities for development that lie hidden in the old colonial farmhouse found here and there?"²² Other books such as: Charles E. Hooper's *Reclaiming the Old House* and *The Country House*; Kate Sanborn's *Adopting*

¹⁹Elizabeth Stillinger, *The Antiquers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1980) 7.

²⁰Wallace Nutting, *Massachusetts Beautiful* (Framingham, MA: Old America Co., 1923) 257.

²¹Joseph Everett Chandler, *The Colonial House* (New York: McBride and Co., 1924) 19.

²²Mary H. Northend, *Remodeled Farmhouse* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1915) 1.

an Abandoned Farm ; and William Woollett's *Old Houses Made New* also suggested extensive decoration and remodeling of farmhouses. All of these writers, however, emphasized the importance of "preserving" the farmhouse. They believed that simply by occupying and "restoring" the farmhouses, residents were admirably preserving the buildings. Mary Northend wrote, "the growing vogue of the country home has lead to the restoration of many of these old time farmhouses and has saved many a valuable structure from falling into decay."²³ Joseph Seabury in *New Houses Under Old Roofs* commented, "Our successful efforts to save these landmarks, as monuments of history and models of early architecture, have been steps toward the recognition of the habitable possibilities in neglected farmhouses."²⁴

Northend advocated "a picturesque result wholly unlike that of the original building...."²⁵ Seabury classified this type of restoration as, "old homes clothed in the dress of modern comfort."²⁶ He also wrote that the colonial home is "made to live in and adorned to please, it needs but the modern touch to bring it again into its own."²⁷ He also stressed that changes have forever been part of the life of an old home, "from the beginning of time man has been accustomed to repair, rebuild, and embellish his abode. The ancestral home from year to year undergoes its structural changes and suffers the introduction of fresh innovations and

²³*Ibid.*, 4 and 5.

²⁴Joseph Seabury, *New Homes Under Old Roofs* (New York: Frederick Stokes Co., 1910) 7.

²⁵Northend, 3.

²⁶Seabury, 11.

²⁷*Ibid.*, 22.

improvements." ²⁸ In 1894 Alvin Lincoln Jones wrote in *Under Colonial Roofs*, "the house must go . . . , sooner or later; for modern conveniences must be had, let landmarks go where they will." ²⁹

The people restoring these houses were generally wealthy urban residents who envisioned in their country homes the same comfort and convenience felt in their city houses. Joseph Seabury noted that early twentieth-century farmhouse dwellers were often urban businessmen:

Only within the limits of the last decade or two have alien househunters gone eagerly forth in quest of new homes under old roofs. While we may prefer to think of historians and antiquarians and artists and poets as secluded inhabitants of picturesque old places, there are now those captains of industry, those little lords of finance who return each day to their firesides to feel again the close touch of early associations and breathe the lingering breath of far forgotten days." ³⁰

Popular periodicals, political movements, books and fairs packaged an environment and lifestyle which appealed to the wealthy urban man. By purchasing and restoring a New England farmhouse, he was assured a haven for comfort and familial happiness. It is understandable that in 1918 the successful Boston lawyer, Harry F.R. Dolan, chose to purchase a farm on one hundred and forty four acres in the small town of Dunstable to spend his summers and weekends. He wrote in 1925's *Harvard Anniversary Report* that "An opportunity to enjoy an outdoor country life in an old-fashioned New England

²⁸*Ibid.*, 11.

²⁹ Alvin Lincoln Jones, *Under Colonial Roofs* (Boston: C. B. Webster, 1894) 1894.

³⁰Seabury, 11.

country neighborhood furnishes me with my principle recreation." ³¹

Harry F.R. Dolan

Harry F. R. Dolan was born in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, in 1876 to Francis and Hannah Dolan. He attended the Cambridge Latin School and received two degrees from Harvard University; his B.A. in 1900 and his law degree in 1902. On June 26, 1906, he married Lillie Eleanor McFall in Cambridge, Massachusetts. The couple had three children Eleanor, Elizabeth, and Harry.³²

The family resided at 390 Huron Avenue in Cambridge, Massachusetts, nearby the Cooper-Frost-Austin and the Hooper-Lee-Nichols Houses, which were restored by Joseph Everett Chandler in 1912 and 1916, respectively.³³ Dolan was a member of the Cambridge Historical Society from 1923 to 1937.³⁴ Although Dolan had not yet become a member of the society when the organization's restoration of the Hopper-Lee-Nichols House took place, he may have been aware of the project. After watching this important restoration, Dolan may have decided that Chandler would be an appropriate architect for the Dunstable Farms project.

In 1925 Dolan wrote, "If I have any hobbies, they must consist of my interest in early American architecture, and my

³¹ Harvard University, *Harvard College Class of 1900 25th Anniversary Report* (Cambridge, MA. Harvard University, 1925) 203.

³² *Ibid.*, 203 and 204.

³³ Richard Candee, Private Files. Also See: Joseph Chandler, "Judge Joseph Lee House, Cambridge MA," *House Beautiful*, Feb. 1922, 108-110.

³⁴ Membership Records, Cambridge Historical Society, 1920-1940.

interest and efforts in collecting American antiques and first editions of American authors."³⁵ The origins of collecting Americana began early in Boston. Clarence Cook observed in 1878 "a 'mania' for antiques in Boston. This he said, was one of the best signs of returning good taste in a community that has long been the victim of the whims and impositions of foreign fashions."³⁶ Because collecting antiques continued to be a sign of "good taste" into the twentieth century, it is understandable that a man, such as Dolan, would have established an extensive collection. In 1916, Bostonian Virginia Robie wrote in *The Quest for the Quaint*, if a man "possesses the collector's instinct to a high degree, much knowledge about everything old under the sun, humor, human understanding, and kindness of spirit, his house will overflow with the rare and the beautiful, the queer and the quaint. So, all together his old dwelling is a treasure house, and the contents are as many sided as the owner."³⁷

Elizabeth Dolan, recalled that every Saturday she and her father visited Boston's Newbury Street antique shops to inquire "what had just arrived."³⁸ According to Elizabeth Dolan, her father knew many prominent men in the field, such as Wallace Nutting. She asserted that her father was,

³⁵Harvard University, *Harvard College Class of 1900 25th Anniversary Report* (Cambridge, MA. Harvard University, 1925) 204.

³⁶Carolyn Flaherty, "The Colonial Revival House," *Old House Journal*, January 1978, 10.

³⁷Virginia Robie, *The Quest for the Quaint* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1916) 103 and 104.

³⁸Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 20 March 1992.

however, self taught and "knew more than anybody else." Elizabeth Dolan said, "collecting antiques was Dad's main interest."³⁹ Most of the furnishings Dolan acquired for Dunstable Farms were made prior to the early nineteenth-century construction date of the farmhouse. In fact, almost all the pieces in the house reflect the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century styles. Dolan had some important pieces such as a seventeenth-century trestle table which was purchased for two thousand dollars from Israel Sack. Elizabeth Dolan insisted in a recent interview that Henry Francis du Pont once contacted her father, anxious to acquire the table for his future museum at Winterthur. Apparently Henry Ford purchased the piece for Greenfield Village at the time the farm was foreclosed by the Home Owner's Loan Corporation in 1934.⁴⁰

Since Dolan's Cambridge house was not colonial in style and never contained the bulk of his antiquarian book or early furniture collections, it would appear that the Dunstable house was purchased with the intention of creating an appropriate environment to display Dolan's antiquarian findings.⁴¹ Dolan wrote shortly before his death, "For a period of several years I have been very much interested in collecting Americana and in restoring in Dunstable, Massachusetts, an old country house and farm. The house was made to represent the best in such a country house in the days when it was built, together with appropriate grounds and

³⁹*Ibid.*

⁴⁰*Ibid.*

⁴¹Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 3 November 1991.

gardens. Our family spent many happy years at this place."⁴² The backdrop Dolan envisioned for his collection was created masterfully by the architect Joseph Everett Chandler soon after Dolan purchased Dunstable Farms.

Joseph Everett Chandler

When Joseph Everett Chandler died in 1945, the bold headline of his obituary in *The Boston Herald* read, "Noted Colonial Authority Dies." The article described him as an "architect, author, horticulturalist and landscape gardener."⁴³ Chandler was eighty-one years of age when he died. He never married and spent his entire life in the Boston Area.⁴⁴

Chandler was born in Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1864. *The Boston Herald*'s obituary mentioned that he was born of "pilgrim ancestry."⁴⁵ He graduated in 1889 from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and by 1891 the young architect had entered the office of Rotch and Tilden as a draftsman.⁴⁶ In 1893 Chandler formed a partnership with George W. Cole at 9 Park Street in Boston.⁴⁷ George Cole died that same year and Chandler practiced alone until 1918 when he formed a partnership with Eliot T. Putnam located at 18 Arlington

⁴²Harvard University. *Harvard College Class of 1900 50th Anniversary Report* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, 1950) 184.

⁴³Obituary, *The Boston Herald*, 20 August 1945.

⁴⁴Boston City Directories.

⁴⁵Obituary, *The Boston Herald*, 20 August 1945.

⁴⁶*Ibid.* and Mark Landry, "Joseph Everett Chandler" (Student Paper, May 1989, Boston University Preservation Library) n.p.

⁴⁷Landry, n.p.

Street.⁴⁸

Chandler was a member of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, the Boston Chapter of the A.I.A. from 1913 to 1918 and the A.I.A. Preservation Committee from 1915 to 1917.⁴⁹ From 1931 until his death Chandler practiced alone. He maintained his office at 18 Arlington Street up to 1935, when he moved his business to his Boston home at 81 Charles Street.⁵⁰ For many years Chandler maintained a country home, by the name of "Manalone" in Sudbury, Massachusetts.⁵¹ Elizabeth Dolan asserted that to her knowledge Putnam never visited the Dunstable Farms site nor had any involvement in the design of the house and grounds.⁵²

Chandler's books *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia* and *The Colonial House* were both published in two editions. Henry Russell Hitchcock wrote that Joseph Everett Chandler's *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia* "provided apparently the first photographic documentation of colonial architecture in book form."⁵³ In 1915, Chandler was asked to write the first article in *The White Pine Series*, monographs illustrating and discussing early American architecture. In reference to the series, Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., wrote, "Architects performed a valuable service for preservationism

⁴⁸Boston City Directories.

⁴⁹A.I.A. *Pioneers in Preservation: Biographical Sketches of Architects Prominent in the Field before World War II* (Washington, D.C.: A.I.A., 1990) 25.

⁵⁰Boston City Directories.

⁵¹Obituary, *The Boston Herald*, 20 August 1945.

⁵²Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 3 November 1991.

⁵³Rhoads, 79.

by popularizing older styles."⁵⁴ These publications established Chandler as a knowledgeable student of colonial forms. Unquestionably, he gained valuable expertise in identifying regional stylistic and temporal characteristics of colonial structures.

Chandler is immortalized by his restorations of several colonial icons of Massachusetts: the Old State House, the House of Seven Gables, and the Paul Revere House. Although Chandler is remembered primarily for restoring these legendary examples, they are only part the picture. Chandler appears to have had a more stylistically varied career than one would gather from considering only these three well-known contributions.

The Frederick Adams Library in Kingston, Massachusetts, which was completed in 1898, was one of Chandler's earliest known commissions (fig. 1).⁵⁵ The library was designed soon after he had compiled photographs for *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia*. Not surprisingly the architectural details and massing of this library reflect his study of neoclassical southern examples. The brick building is one story high and has a monumental central portico. An architectural work of applied symmetry and proportion, the library strongly resembles Homewood in Baltimore, Maryland.⁵⁶ In *The Colonial Architecture of Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia*, Chandler presented more photographs of Homewood than any other building

⁵⁴Charles B. Hosmer, Jr., *Presence of the Past* (New York: G.P. Putnam Sons, 1965) 208 and 209.

⁵⁵Landry, n.p.

⁵⁶Ibid.

featured. Obviously this form of design appealed to him to such a degree that he would design a near replica outside of Boston.

Another interesting early example of Chandler's work is the Blanchard residence in Brookline, Massachusetts of 1899 (fig.2). The Blanchard house strongly resembles the Massachusetts Building which was designed by Peabody and Stearns for the 1893 Colombian Exposition in Chicago. Chandler may have attended the exposition or read well publicized reviews of the fair. Clearly he was influenced by this building which displayed a variety of colonial motifs from various time periods and geographic regions. In a 1911 *House and Garden* article Rose Standish Nichols wrote that in the Blanchard House design, "Chandler was thoroughly conversant with both the spirit and the letter of the period and is guided in his selection of what to copy by excellent judgment and refined taste.... It is difficult to detect that they were not built in colonial days."⁵⁷ The end chimneys and gambrel roof suggest that, like the Frederick Adams Library, Chandler found southern colonial characteristics desirable qualities to emulate.

Joseph Everett Chandler sought to design the "sensible colonial house" which he believed lacked "pretense and sham."⁵⁸ He despised the modern design work which he classified as "English Georgian"- a style popularized by architects like Ogden Codman and McKim, Mead and White. Chandler wrote that many of the large and elegant Georgian

⁵⁷Rose Standish Nichols, "Local Color in Architecture," *House and Garden*, February 1911, 69-70.

⁵⁸Chandler, 18.

mansions designed after 1880 by these well-known architects "show the hideous phase of social unrest which may be largely produced by the vulgar ostentation of too many wealthy people." ⁵⁹ "The tendencies of the day," Chandler believed, made Americans "rotten before they are ripe."⁶⁰ Chandler praised the poet John Greenleaf Whittier's "Snowbound" for describing "the homely joys of farm life in farmhouses."⁶¹ Rhoads pointed out that Chandler "sought to recreate (with a few concessions to the modern age) the sort of sturdy not to say heroic life portrayed in the poem."⁶² By carefully studying and faithfully adopting colonial models, Chandler felt he could create a distinctive atmosphere consistent with the simple colonial prototype.⁶³

Regarding modern work Chandler wrote,

When the house approaches greater size and more money is at command, the designers, as a rule, have apparently given full rein to fancy. The result has usually been a multiplication of features and details of such alarming profligacy that it would appear that the sole desire had been to make every colonial feature ever used, in one final rendering that should distance all predecessors. That is not the colonial feeling-restraint being the great quality so much practiced by the earlier designers, and quite as necessary to exercise in modern day work."⁶⁴

He noted, "the avalanche of the so-called Colonial work... since 1880 ... bristles with features with the sad inclination to be understudied, badly proportioned, and

⁵⁹*Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, 59.

⁶¹Chandler, 6.

⁶²Rhoads, 412.

⁶³Chandler, 18.

⁶⁴*Ibid.*, 185.

generally uncomfortable in disposition."⁶⁵ He referred to the well known McKim, Mead and White designed Taylor House in Newport, Rhode Island as "an otherwise too elaborate domicile, in that, although the fenestration is well studied,...the ornamentation is frequently trivial and too abundant."⁶⁶ Chandler probably would have argued, that the Blanchard house was a more modest and well proportioned example of "modern colonial" work.

The Ransvott and Sharpe residences designed in 1903, next door to one another in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, were two of Chandler's works which embody no colonial features (figs. 3 & 4).⁶⁷ The houses share design elements more commonly associated with the nineteenth-century exotic revival movements. The Sharpe house is a large and exaggerated English half-timbered dwelling. The Ransvott house combines Norwegian and Japanese design features.⁶⁸ Although there are numerous examples of these exotic revival buildings in the Chestnut Hill area, these examples are not characteristic of Chandler's work. By experimenting with popular design styles of the period, Chandler early in his career may have been attempting to establish a reputation as an architect conversant with numerous architectural types. All of the works mentioned thus far were noted in popular periodicals. This form of recognition, particularly of Chandler's colonial style projects, probably advanced his career.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, 1.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 185.

⁶⁷Landry, n.p.

⁶⁸John Wescott, "The Newtons," *Indoors and Out*, January 1905, 12-15.

By 1910 Chandler had become involved in the growing movement to save and restore well known colonial landmarks. In the first decade of the twentieth century he restored the Paul Revere House, the Old State House, the Nurse House, the House of Seven Gables and the Quincy Homestead.⁶⁹ Hosmer wrote somewhat critically of Chandler's work on the Paul Revere House, "Joseph Chandler removed most later additions and went back to its 1680 exterior appearance, it was treated as an architectural monument to such an extent that Paul Revere, were he to return to North Square, would not recognize it as the house in which he long lived."⁷⁰ Chandler stressed, however, the importance of acting conservatively in restoration work. He wrote, "It is decidedly better in such a sensitive and conservative style to underdo, in restoration particularly, rather than overdo either that number of noticeable features or their pronouncedness. If there is a suspicion that wrong features or details are being introduced, it is not safer but infinitely more satisfactory later from the standpoint both of authenticity and of artistic quality- to err on the conservative side."⁷¹

A writer in *The Boston Transcript* wrote of Chandler's careful search for evidence. Chandler's findings were methodically followed in the Revere House project.

The job became one of inference. From a lower sill, scraped by the opening and shutting of the framework, it was clear that the original windows had been casements, swinging outward. From extant mouldings it was possible to reconstruct the interior woodwork; from half a dozen authentic clapboards of a design obviously authentic, the whole

⁶⁹Richard Candee, Private Files, Boston University.

⁷⁰Hosmer, *Presence of the Past*, 13.

⁷¹Chandler, 162.

exterior was clapboarded with an effect of texture (in its ogee mouldings and scarfed ends) which places the aspect, at a glance, as previous to the eighteenth century."⁷²

In 1914, an article in *The Architectural Record* mentioned that the Revere House was "rich in suggestion of the antique and the picturesque. More than any other of the group of houses restored by Mr. Chandler's skill and scholarship, these rooms manage to create an 'atmosphere.'"⁷³ This notion of creating an "antique and picturesque atmosphere" was an aesthetic ideal for the colonial revivalists. In fact, Chandler figured, "the only way of restoring a house when it is being served for historical purposes, or as an example of the development of a type of architecture, is to restore it - by which is meant that no simplest detail is too trivial to be considered by which the sum-total in 'atmosphere' may be obtained."⁷⁴ Although Chandler stressed the importance of conservative restorations, he may have valued the popular picturesque ideal to such an extent that authenticity became less of a priority; especially in projects where little original evidence existed.

In 1919, Chandler worked closely with Norman Isham and Sumner Appleton on the restoration of the Browne House in Watertown, Massachusetts. Abbott Lowell Cummings has commented that Sumner Appleton's work equaled if not surpassed the work of Isham and Chandler because Appleton

⁷² "Restoration of the Paul Revere House, Boston," *Architectural Record*, Volume 36, 1914, 80.

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ Chandler, 163.

"showed restraint" and a "reluctance to gloss." Appleton also insisted on maintaining meticulous records, both written and photographic. Chandler may have been considered a far less conservative restorer than Appleton.⁷⁵

In a revealing letter from Murray P. Course to Sumner Appleton at the time of the Browne House restoration, Chandler's reputation is discussed:

It gives me great satisfaction to hear that Mr. Chandler is going to help you. He seems to be far and away the ablest of our archeologists, for he has not only knowledge and experience, but what is so often ignored, architectural skill and artistic appreciation. So many restorations are spoiled by lack of these very qualities, restorations that seem otherwise perfectly literal. After all, to revive the feeling, the atmosphere of the old is most important; and as the old was essentially artistic it stands to reason that only an artist can do so. If we simply turn out a dry literal reconstructions (as the Germans do) the result is worse than useless, for people think: How ugly those things were. Why spend money in preserving them."⁷⁶

Course's letter reflects the prevailing early twentieth-century taste for the creation of a romanticized colonial environment. Architects who followed popular taste, such as Chandler, may have designed in this method to please an audience who desired attractive and reassuring public restorations. This letter suggests that Chandler had a reputation for working in this manner.

In private restoration work Chandler showed little restraint in embellishing houses with an abundance of colonial motifs. Obviously this contradicts some of

⁷⁵Abbott Lowell Cummings, *The Framed Houses of Massachusetts Bay, 1625-1725* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979) 2.

⁷⁶Course to Appleton, 13 May 1991, Microfiche, Browne House Aquisition, House and Building, c(5), S. P. N. E. A.

Chandler's remarks in *The Colonial House* on the importance of exercising design restraint and conservatism in architectural projects. Whether he always practiced in a manner consistent with his writings is highly questionable. Chandler contradicted himself several times in *The Colonial House*. For example after he criticized the over-embellishment of the modern "English Georgian" houses, he wrote that "Colonial work is full of such possibilities of adaptation for people who care enough about that type of thing to give the time to study it, draw it, and put it into execution." " Through artistry and "adaptation," perhaps at the expense of authenticity, Chandler could create attractive and desirable colonial environments for his clients. Perhaps he wrote of the importance of "restrained" colonial architecture because it was an envisioned ideal, however, not a reality which could always be practiced in the domestic climate of the time.

Although Chandler closely followed colonial precedents in private restoration work, he also exercised his artistic freedom unabashedly to combine details from various time periods and geographic regions in one project. Almost all of his private restorations involved the enlargement of the original building. He frequently added elegant porches, piazzas and door surrounds to plain exteriors and summer beams, elegant chimney breasts, shell cupboards, staircases and bookshelves to embellish simple interiors.

In *The Colonial House* Chandler praised and pictured a restoration in Southboro, Massachusetts, by the architect

⁷⁷Chandler, 123.

Charles M. Baker. Chandler remarked that "here an original house of distinction was added to so largely that it occupied but a small portion of the ultimate house; but so successfully have the various desired features been added that the spirit of the whole work is to be highly commended... the best of taste has been used in adapting new parts, retaining what is good in the old, and tying it all together into a livable modern structure."⁷⁸

He also recognized a restoration near Boston by the architectural firm of Derby and Robinson, where "all unnecessary detail is suppressed and such an important modern requirement as a piazza room is obtained in a most simple and natural way." In this enlargement, "the main lines are not at all harmed and the whole offers an example of an excellent adaptation of early forms to modern requirements."⁷⁹

Chandler most clearly expressed his philosophy regarding private restoration as follows:

When houses are restored to modern planning and convenience for family residences it is best to not to be too strict in such matters - unless the example is of great architectural worth- as it is possible by adopting the same spirit which is evidenced in the original work to do many and various things which may add to the comfort and modern standards of living-- not always necessary, but sometimes convenient to accede to."⁸⁰

Throughout his career Chandler followed the accepted styles of the time. He seemed to "accede" to the desires of his audience. By designing a wide variety of revival buildings early in his career he could determine what

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 163 and 192.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 192.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, 163.

stylistic form appealed most to his Boston clientele. In following the popular revival styles, he was assured recognition in well known journals. After several years of experimentation, Chandler may have chosen the colonial form of eclecticism exclusively, simply because experience had proven that this was the most popular style with his clients. At this time his books and numerous public restorations gave him the reputation of an expert in things "colonial" and allowed him to study the subject thoroughly. Unrestrained in his private commissions, he could embellish rather modest dwellings with the elegant colonial motifs he had previously studied. This form of "artistic" restoration naturally appealed to clients who at this time sought nothing more than the richly developed "colonial atmosphere."

Between 1921 and 1931 Chandler would create a picturesque colonial environment for Harry F.R. Dolan. It is interesting that Chandler in *The Colonial House* romanticized a house type which approximates Dunstable Farms.

The modest country roadside dwelling of simple outline, mass, and color, with distinctive roof, -- sociably near the public passing, -- with its stone walls and lilac clumps, its possible well-sweep, the house perhaps of the simple gable-end roof type, is a well-known and most welcome encounter. Its lack of piazza room, or even porch, bespeaks its origin in the effort of a hard-working man of from one hundred to two hundred or more years ago to house comfortably his family during that fortunate growth of population which was the immediate fruit of the the sturdy Anglo- Saxon immigrant who, oftenest of the avenues of support in a raw new country, of necessity chose that of agriculture."⁸¹

When Chandler first saw the Dunstable farmhouse it would

⁸¹*Ibid.*, 10.

have been surrounded by "lilac clumps" and stone walls (fig.5). The property had two wells. The farmhouse lacked piazzas and porches and sat close to the public highway. Two large elms had picturesquely shaded the house for close to a hundred years. Prior to the Dolan's occupancy the house had been owned only by men who made their living from the land. The simple architectural design, picturesque landscape and rugged occupant history of Dunstable Farms would have appealed immensely to Chandler who described a house such as this as "a most welcome encounter."

The Construction Date, Original Appearance and Early Occupants of Dunstable Farms

The original construction date of Dunstable Farms has been somewhat controversial in the local written histories. This is largely due to the fact that at least two homesteads were built on this one hundred and forty-four acre parcel of land farmed by three successive generations of Butterfields. In *Dunstable Village* (1973), Curtis H. Gates asserted that the farm was constructed in 1783 by Leonard Butterfield.⁸² Presently, a plaque east of the front portico also notes this date of construction. After examining early deeds for the property, it is clear that the farmhouse presently standing on the site was built sometime between 1773 and 1824.⁸³ Evidently a house existed on the property by 1824, because at this time Leonard Butterfield, Sr., gave one hundred and forty-four acres with what was described as a "home farm" to

⁸²Gates, 12.

⁸³Dunstable Deed Book 6, 226 and Dunstable Deed Book 8, 420.

his son Leonard Butterfield, Jr.⁸⁴

A comment in Nason's history (1877) suggests that the house was built much later than 1783. Although Nason did not suggest a specific date of construction, he asserted that the house presently standing on the farmland was built by Leonard Butterfield, Jr.⁸⁵ Because town birth records indicate that Leonard Butterfield, Jr. was not born until 1772, it can be assumed the house was built several years after the reputed date of 1783.⁸⁶ Nason noted that the home of Leonard Butterfield, Sr. was located across the street on Meeting House Hill which is also part of the one hundred and forty-four acre parcel. This house was apparently destroyed prior to the 1877 publication date because Nason noted that only the cellar hole of the original Butterfield homestead remained.⁸⁷

Although there is no surviving record to suggest the date of the marriage of Leonard Butterfield Jr. and Mary, their first child, Polly, was born in 1797.⁸⁸ Perhaps a few years after the marriage, Leonard Butterfield, Jr., built a house for his family across the street from the homestead of his father. The early history presented by Nason seems more plausible when approximating the construction date of Dunstable Farms than the plaque and recent Gate's history.

Some of the construction details also suggest that the house was built close to 1800. Early twentieth-century

⁸⁴Ibid., 8, 420.

⁸⁵Nason, 141.

⁸⁶Ibid., 271.

⁸⁷Ibid., 161.

⁸⁸Ibid., 277.

photographs confirm that there were plaster ceilings in all the rooms. Also the shallow fireplace openings indicate that coal rather than wood was burned in the house. An original cupboard in the present living room is also very typical of the early nineteenth century. A well known expert in the field of New England architecture, Richard Candee, after examining early twentieth century interior and exterior photographs of the farmhouse suggested that the dwelling was built as late as the first quarter of the nineteenth century.⁸⁹

The earliest documentation of the house is in the form of a undated etching reproduced in Nason's 1877 history, which shows the southwest side of the house (fig.6). At this time the house had no dormers or side porches. The central entrance door was quite simple in design. The fence surrounding the house has since been changed and moved further east. Also a well was visible southwest of the barn.

The earliest known detailed description of the house came from Ida Rachel Butterfield. In 1958, she wrote that "the old Butterfield homestead has now gone out of the family and has had its surroundings somewhat glorified, but outwardly the house is the same and the big red barn and outbuildings are about as Uncle Dexter left them (fig. 7)."⁹⁰ Dexter Butterfield occupied the house from 1868 to 1894.⁹¹ Ida Butterfield remembered that during her Uncle's occupancy there were lilac bushes but no flower garden on the property.

⁸⁹Richard Candee, Interview with author, 6 February 1992.

⁹⁰Gates, 12.

⁹¹Deed Book 63 p. 370 and 371 and Deed Book 144, p. 250.

She described a well close to the road and another behind the house. Photographs and Ida Butterfield's description confirm that the original landscaping of Dunstable Farms was fairly simple, in that there were few planting and the out buildings had practical rather than decorative uses.

Ida Butterfield recalled that "in the front [of the house], stood two large elms, so typical of the times."⁹² These old tree plantings appealed immensely to Dolan and may have been influential in his selection of the Dunstable Farms property.⁹³ They represented the most picturesque and decorative element of the original landscape.

Elms were a significant landscape feature during the colonial revival. In a recent essay, William Butler commented that "the survival of elms from previous generations, and even from the colonial and federal periods, symbolized a link with the past and even the endurance of a new country. The American elm became an icon of the colonial revival."⁹⁴ Butler also noted that elms created "a homogeneous 'colonial' appearance.... Such tree formations also suggested an important spiritual security, people readily associating over arching branches with the all embracing arms of God."⁹⁵ As early as 1873 Nason recognized the beauty of the Dunstable village elms. He wrote, "The long row of elms in the center of town furnish grateful shade and give an air of rural beauty."⁹⁶

⁹²Gates, 12.

⁹³Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 20 March 1992.

⁹⁴Axelrod, 105.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, 37.

⁹⁶Nason, 72.

Henry James in his travels though New England appreciated the elms' ability to create a scene:

The goodly elms, on either side of the large 'straight 'street,' rise from their grassy margin in double, ever and anon in triple, file; the white paint on the wooden walls, amid open dooryards, reaffirms itself eternally behind them - though hanging back, during the best of the season, with a sun-checkered, "amusing" vagueness; while the great verdurous vista, the high canopy of meeting branches, has an air of conspicuously playing the trick of carrying off the picture."⁹⁷

This ability to "carry off the picture" was a design ideal of the colonial revivalists. Applied landscape features in the form of abundant gardens, outbuildings, tree plantings and fences also "conspicuously" created an idealized colonial atmosphere. As James understood the trick of the elms, Chandler understood the ability of a building's environment to fool and entice the observer.

Dressing up the Farm

The Garden, Fence, and Out-buildings

Chandler designed an elaborate flower garden, fruit orchards and numerous out-buildings for the Dunstable Farms property. His flower garden plan included a reflecting pool, statuary, benches, path systems, and lush and colorful planting beds (figs. 8, 9 & 10). He designed two wellhouses and a summer house for the site. Chandler also introduced a pineapple-topped fence to shield the garden from the road

⁹⁷James, 39.

(figs. 11 & 12). Chandler wrote,

To be without the love of it [the garden] is to miss much of the gusto of life; and to be lacking in the proper appreciation of it, if one has a country place or even a suburban place, is to miss much of the necessary stimulus and spur for making it attain to that degree of perfection in composition and individuality which produces the ideal place in which to pass the best hours of life - the home hours."⁹⁸

Chandler must have been particularly concerned with the garden in his development of the Dunstable Farms project. His drawings involving the landscape are extremely detailed and outnumber his plans for the interior of the house.

In landscape design practice, Chandler preferred formal rather than naturalistic gardens.⁹⁹ He wrote "an occasional widening of lines in square[s], rectangle[s], or circle[s], with perhaps a central feature of urn, decorative flower pot, statue, or pool, at once furnishes the subject for the picture -- provided it is graced by a background of foliage sufficiently varied in form and color."¹⁰⁰ At various axis points throughout the Dunstable Farms garden, Chandler positioned a pool, millstone, well house and summer house. He suggested popular "old-fashioned" plantings to provide color and define the garden paths. Some of the flowers Chandler placed in the garden are discussed in *Plants of Colonial Days*. In this publication Raymond L. Taylor identified Sweet William, poppies, and foxgloves as documented eighteenth-century plantings; Chandler selected these and other reputable "old-fashioned" flowers for the Dunstable Farms

⁹⁸*Ibid.*

⁹⁹*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰*Ibid.*, 199 and 200.

garden design.¹⁰¹ Historical accuracy, however, was not Chandler's primary objective. A modest early nineteenth-century farmhouse garden would never have had such an overabundance of flowers or outbuildings designed for purely decorative purposes. Chandler was familiar with "old-fashioned" plants. However, the way he chose to display these varieties was unlike any garden known previously at this particular site.

He may have embellished the garden to a great extent because he believed that well planted gardens enlivened the simple colonial interior. He wrote,

somehow the spirit of a delightful garden seems to have accumulated such an excess of strength and desire for expansion that it forthwith marched inside the house and spread its cheerful charm and influence over each and every feature of the home. Conclusively the whole effect puts the painful New England parlor of old effectually out of mind; and at a glance one has no fear of encountering that ancient musty parlor atmosphere which too often accumulated in seldom-used rooms."¹⁰²

Chandler, in describing his colonial gardens, envisioned the potential for romantic settings. Fruit trees, he commented, grow "gradually to considerable proportions adding a perennial charm by their arching galleries among which sparser flowering varieties of plants find abundant green to enhance their attractiveness, with the resulting effect of great simplicity and an indescribable air of peace."¹⁰³ Chandler said steps, arches, hedges and grape arbors make

¹⁰¹Raymond L. Taylor, *Plants of Colonial Days* (Williamsburg: VA: Colonial Williamsburg, 1952) 39, 64 and 83.

¹⁰²Chandler, 203.

¹⁰³*Ibid.*, 195.

the view "charmingly picturesque-- not too grandiose for enjoyment...." ¹⁰⁴ He used all of these elements at the Dunstable Farms site. In a recent essay Charles B. Hosmer, Jr. noted that during the colonial revival "where gardens were concerned, the revival of the past was the creation of a picture of beauty, a romantic setting that would give pleasure." ¹⁰⁵ Mary Northend appreciated the romantic nature of the "modern colonial garden." She wrote that

the artistic possibilities of these [colonial gardens] have appealed so strongly to the flower lover that they have been restored into their own once more. Like pictures seem these old-fashioned gardens, framed with thoughts of of days long gone by, and one unconsciously sighs for those days that are gone, taking with them the sweet odor of the flowers that grew in our grandmother's time."¹⁰⁶

Chandler's octagonal summerhouse at the end of the Dunstable Farms main garden path is a particularly romantic and picturesque landscape feature (figs. 13 & 14). In *The Colonial House*, Chandler wrote that the summer house should be "a building of that delicate playful tendency which graces so well the central point of the long path ... of gardens of the old fashioned sort."¹⁰⁷ Summer houses, "by their force of charm are returning to us in restorations or by intelligent revival."¹⁰⁸ Charles Hooper commented that "the summer-house... makes the garden habitable."¹⁰⁹ This form of

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 205.

¹⁰⁵Axelrod, 69.

¹⁰⁶Mary H. Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings* (Boston: Little Brown and Co., 1912) 53.

¹⁰⁷Chandler, 208 and 209.

¹⁰⁸*Ibid.*, 209.

¹⁰⁹Charles E. Hopper, *Reclaiming the Old House* (New York: McBride, Nast and Co., 1913) 146.

design, Chandler believed, should always be painted white and may have a domed top and trellises to accommodate vines. The summer house at Dunstable Farms embodies all of the qualities Chandler described in *The Colonial House*.

Regarding the interior of a summer house Chandler wrote,

One's breath is fairly taken away on landing at the top of these stairs in a really beautiful room, wainscoted and paneled and with coved ceiling, and delightful cupboards for the putting away of tea-things. And ranged about the room in quaint regularity a pair of sofas, tea-tables, and chairs, all in the best period of Massachusetts' Colonial heyday; while the china, in its refurnished state has been known to make visitors forget their whereabouts completely."¹¹⁰

Dolan filled the paneled interior of the summer house with antique furnishings and his new cupboards with Chinese export porcelain. The family used the house for serving tea and enjoying the garden. Chandler may have designed this structure knowing that when the building was filled with some of Dolan's antiques, that such a successful "colonial" atmosphere would be created that visitors could easily "forget their whereabouts completely."

The garden, orchard and outbuildings were an evocative aspect of the exterior environment Chandler created. To "carry off the picture," completely however, Chandler believed it was essential to enrich the architectural exterior of the farmhouse as well as the grounds.

¹¹⁰Chandler, 208.

Exterior Architectural Changes

Chandler wrote in *The Colonial House*, "in the matter of color, there is nothing so beautiful as the white house if paint is used."¹¹¹ Chandler also pointed out that "painting the trim and body of the house white was particularly successful on a country dwelling."¹¹² Early photographs indicate that prior to the Chandler restoration the house was unpainted (fig. 15). Research on the original exterior finishes of rural colonial houses of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century confirms that white was not a popular color treatment.¹¹³ Captain David Willard, recalling his late eighteenth-century boyhood, described no white houses in the town of Newington, Ct. He remembered one dwelling painted "a greenish color, a few Spanish brown, all others of natural wood color."¹¹⁴ During the colonial revival many architects besides Chandler choose to paint farmhouses white. Joseph Seabury in *Old Houses Under New Roofs* illustrates fifty farmhouses before and after restoration. Nearly seventy-five percent of these dwellings were painted white during early twentieth century remodelings.

Carolyn Flaherty suggests that the popular misconception of painting exterior and interior woodwork white emerged at the Chicago Fair of 1898.¹¹⁵ Also the Sanitary Movement in

¹¹¹*Ibid.*, 179.

¹¹²*Ibid.*, 179.

¹¹³Carolyn Flaherty, "The Colonial Revival House," *Old House Journal*, January 1978, 10.

¹¹⁴R.T.H. Halsey and Elizabeth Tower, *The Homes of our Ancestors* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1934) 42.

¹¹⁵Flaherty, 9.

the United States may have indirectly influenced American's need to sanitize and thus improve buildings by painting their exterior and much of the interior white.

Painting Dunstable Farms white was simply one step in Chandler's process of beautifying the farmhouse. He applied this popular surface treatment to purify and clean-up what may have been considered then an unattractively plain exterior. His desire to embellish the outside of the house is also apparent in the addition of a new entrance door and side porches.

In a chapter entitled "Colonial Doorways," which appeared in *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, Mary Northend commented that among the numerous items carried on ships between the "motherland and the new country" were "placed as cargoes, pillars, columns, and bits of shaped wood, all to be used in the construction of the new home, and incidentally in the porch. It was no easy task to devise from these fragments a complete and artistic whole...."¹¹⁶ This rather humorous myth can be considered an indicator of the significance the colonial revivalists placed on their early entrance porticoes. After all, to the colonial revivalists only items of great importance were placed on the "ancient" vessels of our forefathers. In the early twentieth century the front door was crucial symbolic element of the home.

Mary Northend wrote, "There is no more significant element in these old colonial houses than the front door."¹¹⁷ Ellen M. Rosenthal noted in a recent essay "The Colonial

¹¹⁶Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, 17.

¹¹⁷*Ibid.*

Revival: New Words for an Old Book" that during the Victorian period certain aspects of the home became immensely symbolic. She commented that "at no other time in history has the home been so important, not simply as a refuge for the family, but as the central artifact in communicating a sense of self." The symbolic language that was created during the colonial revival era, Rosenthal asserted, "can be considered simply a new expanded edition of the dictionary containing recent additions to the language."¹¹⁸

Clearly during the 1920s the front door was an indicator of good taste and comfortable living. In 1912 Mary Northend wrote that "porches and doorways expressed both hospitality and refinement...."¹¹⁹ After considering this thought it is understandable that Chandler wrote, "The first impression is an important consideration and the sunnily exposed front entrance doorway may be a potent exponent of what is to follow. The doorway is certainly a good index of the family behind it."¹²⁰ Northend commented that colonial doorways embodied "not only the characteristics of the period in which they were built, but the personality of the owner as well."¹²¹ After considering the writings of Northend and Chandler regarding the importance of entrance doors, it is understandable that Chandler would suggest an entirely new front door design for Dunstable Farms. Chandler unquestionably wished to create a door frame which conveyed a

¹¹⁸Geoffrey L. Rossano, *Creating a Dignified Past: Museums and the Colonial Revival* (Savage, MD : Rowman and Littlefield Pub., 1991) 73 and 74.

¹¹⁹Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, 17.

¹²⁰Chandler, 34.

¹²¹Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, 18.

great deal more grandeur than the original simple example (figs. 16 & 17).

During the first quarter of the twentieth century numerous authors published photographs of colonial doors. Perhaps the best known of these examples, which appeared in several editions, is *Old New England Doorways* by Albert G. Robinson. It is interesting that nearly all of the doors in Robinson's book are intricately carved; clearly suggesting that elegant eighteenth-century door designs were fashionable to the early twentieth-century reader. Dolan owned a copy of *Old New England Doorways*. Three doorways depicted in the book from Deerfield, Portsmouth and Newburyport closely resemble Chandler's Dunstable doorway design. At the suggestion of Dolan, Chandler may have borrowed design elements from these popular examples

Dolan and Chandler traveled to Amherst, New Hampshire, to study and photograph designs Chandler felt appropriate for the Dunstable Farms project. An undated letter from Chandler to Dolan discussed their visit to the town, "Here are the prints for you of the more important subjects which came out well on the memorable occasion of our colonial junket and I am grateful to you for the opportunity of getting them."¹²² Going on what Chandler described as a "colonial junket" was not unusual for an architect and his client. Particularly during the 1920s the notion of searching out ideal colonial examples was viewed as an inviting pastime. In terms of doorways, Robinson wrote, "Hunting for old doorways is a

¹²²Undated correspondence, Chandler to Dolan, Collection of Elizabeth Dolan.

harmless and interesting amusement, much like botanizing or collecting postage stamps...the pleasure of hunting for old doorways in New England lies almost as much in the search as in the discovery."¹²³

It was common for colonial revival architects to copy features from attractive nearby houses. Wallace Nutting wrote in 1923 that, "the influence of example,... is universal and an attractive farm place never exists long without imitators. We have noticed many instances where a door head or a gable was copied for miles around."¹²⁴ Hooper in *Reclaiming the Farmhouse* wrote of an example he had seen in New England, "The original door was a double affair and so narrow that to use one half of it was a nuisance. The new doors were similar in design but wider. The doorway is a composite and has its origin in different examples."¹²⁵ Chandler wrote that in restorations "it is better to stick pretty closely to precedent in that particular period in which the problem happens to lie, and it should not be difficult to find something in old examples which it would be advisable to consult."¹²⁶

Clearly the three part doorway was a feature which evolved from Chandler and Dolan's trip to Amherst, New Hampshire. Dolan requested that Chandler design a door wide enough to permit the movement of furniture in and out of the farmhouse.¹²⁷ A wide three paneled door could easily satisfy

¹²³Albert G. Robinson, *Old New England Doorways* (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1919) 21.

¹²⁴Nutting, 230.

¹²⁵Hooper, 111.

¹²⁶Chandler, 162.

¹²⁷Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 3 November 1991.

Dolan's request. Chandler photographed the door of the Carreth House, sent it to Dolan and distinguished it as a "more important subject" (fig. 18). Obviously he copied elements from this eighteenth-century design, as well as those he may have seen in Robinson's book and incorporated them into a prominent new doorway for Dunstable Farms.

Mary Northend wrote in a romantic fashion of the beauty of the side piazza, "During the summer months a broad piazza is a delightful out-of-door living room, from which there is a splendid view over the green country; and one can, in imagination, picture the old stage coaches of former days lumbering by on the highroad."¹²⁸ Chandler designed two piazzas at Dunstable Farms to provide, as Northend discussed, a place to enjoy the attractive landscape and perhaps to imagine "former days."

Although the outdoor piazza was a feature rarely incorporated into eighteenth-century New England architecture, it was a gratefully accepted element of the early twentieth-century residence. Hooper wrote that "the piazza is not, strictly speaking a feature of the Georgian style.... For all this, it is one of the demands of our modern life and hence must be reckoned with."¹²⁹

Chandler detested sleeping porches but loved attached small porches. He commented that "a porch, not too large, is a comfortable prelude and index for arriving friends, and, if the climate is a severe one, it can be glazed very easily in

¹²⁸Northend, *Colonial Houses and their Furnishings*, 79.

¹²⁹Hooper, 51.

the winter."¹³⁰ Later in *The Colonial House* he noted that, "The idea of making the piazza an out-of-door living room didn't so obsess the owners as to lead them to force the feature into too great prominence, as is the case in many recent examples; nor had that much upsetting feature, the 'sleeping porch,' arrived to tax the ingenuity of designers." Chandler disliked vestibules even more than sleeping porches. He believed that the implementation of a "not too large" porch does away with the need for, "that wet Blanket, the vestibule, one of those features the invention of which must be attributed to the evil one himself- and, furthermore, stamped as one of his most triumphant machinations.... To be ushered into one of these narrow boxes... is a trying moment for the visitor, and he is entirely excusable if he turns, flees, and cannily fails to reappear."¹³¹

Clearly Chandler had definite ideas of what architecture forms could be appropriately attached to a house. Two small side porches placed at either end of Dunstable Farms were designed as attractive sheltered places to enjoy the landscape. The Dolans used the porches frequently. Elizabeth Dolan commented that, "Basically, I think we lived on the porches. We were inside all winter, but in the summer we ate on the porches most all of our meals."¹³²

The Dolan's appreciated the landscape Chandler had created and entertained most frequently outside on the

¹³⁰Chandler, 35.

¹³¹Chandler, 35.

¹³²Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 20 March 1992.

porches or on the brick terrace behind the house. The largest parties Elizabeth Dolan could recall at the house occurred annually the Saturday following the Harvard commencement weekend. Dolan entertained fifty to sixty guests on the brick patio behind the house overlooking the garden and summer house. The guests were employees from the law firm of Dolan, Morson and Stebbins and "important clients." Each year Dolan hired the orchestra that played at the Harvard class day to entertain the group. For Dolan the exterior world Chandler created was as important to show to his friends as the interior.¹³³

The Creation of a Respectable Colonial Interior for Display

While Chandler created the architectural interior, Dolan decided what furnishings would be appropriate to the house. Dolan was strict in his collecting. He was proud of his collection and Chandler's design ability. Elizabeth Dolan noted, "We had a lot of company. Everybody that came Dad would walk them through and show them the house."¹³⁴ Elizabeth Dolan discussed her father's approach to the furnishings in this manner, "He just felt things had to belong and if you had a farm that was that old, you had to have furniture which was that old. The furniture had to belong there. Nothing was very unusual, certainly nothing that you'd put a sign on and admire. It was a place to

¹³³Ibid.

¹³⁴Ibid.

live." ¹³⁵ Dolan's furniture collection was not appropriate to the date of construction, and Elizabeth Dolan admitted that "At the farm, all the furniture was earlier than when the house was built."¹³⁶

In *The Colonial House* Chandler expressed his views on proper interior decoration as well as architectural design. In his writings he advocated an interpretation of the colonial interior which was far more artistic than literal. In a rather humorous manner Chandler wrote that

'Period' rooms in which superlative care is manifest that no slightest chair-leg of the wrong period shall intrude into the particular half-century chosen for the field of operation, are tiresome and pretentious and indicate on the part of the owners evident lack of 'background'- as of having arrived with the ship which bore new fortunes and having no affectionate retrospect of earlier life."¹³⁷

Chandler advocated the "selection of simple inconspicuous furniture, furnishings, and the more intimate objects."¹³⁸ Interiors he believed should receive "adequate cornices," a baseboard "kept confined in its measurements," and everywhere, he noted, there should be "evident a suppression of noticeable features, together with refinement of detail...."¹³⁹

And why does it all look so natural, so without effort, and so satisfactory? It is the old story of knowing how - the old story of a simple satisfying background against which are placed well-chosen articles of furniture and house garnishing by a person who knows and *feels*; things adjusted with

¹³⁵Ibid.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Chandler, 173 and 174.

¹³⁸Ibid., 173.

¹³⁹Ibid., 150.

discrimination- the right forms and textures against the right construction and color."¹⁴⁰

He asserted, "there has been too much striving" in the decoration of the interior... and "the best of these [colonial] houses is most impressive in the effect of spontaneity which it affords."¹⁴¹

The Seventeenth-Century Stairhall

Chandler's treatment of the stair hall is in many ways similar to his approach to the front door. In both the front door and hall, Chandler radically embellished a simple original (figs. 19 & 20). In *The Colonial House*, he wrote, "the importance of the staircase and its adaptability to changing requirements, often through necessities if plan and still oftener through the desire to enrich an easily varied feature, has led to a great variety of examples in plan as well as detail."¹⁴² In *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings* Mary Northend commented that "happily, present day house builders are coming to a realizing sense of the importance of the hallway."¹⁴³ By copying certain elements from the well publicized and sadly destroyed Beniah Titcomb house in Newburyport, Massachusetts, Chandler "enriched" a feature which, during the colonial revival, was recognized for its "adaptability."

¹⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 203.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*, 173 and 150.

¹⁴²*Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁴³Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, 62

The Titcomb House was destroyed in 1911 and Chandler may have been thinking about the loss of this building when he worked on Dunstable Farms.¹⁴⁴ In *The Colonial House*, Chandler recognized the Titcomb House stairhall design as "the handsomest known at present."¹⁴⁵ Chandler believed that in some cases copying admired features from a threatened colonial structure was a far more admirable endeavor than saving the building itself.

As a matter of fact, many [old houses] are saved which are not worth the cost of the match which might fire them. Of no particular interest detail or other saving feature, they are rotten, dirty, ill planned, and worthless; and if the same persons who go to such lengths to save them would merely subscribe to a new effort to perpetuate a few of the features they have admired in the ruin, they might obtain the same charm and atmosphere which undoubtedly comes to even one of these poorer houses if carefully made over."¹⁴⁶

Perhaps Chandler intended to "perpetuate admired features" by copying aspects of the stairhall from the destroyed Titcomb House (fig. 21). He incorporated drops into the design perhaps to add to the charm of the staircase. The drop ornaments on the exterior of the Titcomb House he noted, "savored Jacobean England."¹⁴⁷

Undoubtedly the most interesting aspect of the Chandler Dunstable Farms stairhall lies in its allusion to early American furniture design. Chandler's rendering recalls the stern court cupboards and wainscoted chests of the seventeenth century. Dolan probably embraced the creation of

¹⁴⁴Notation on Photograph, Newburyport, MA Photograph File, S.P.N.E.A.

¹⁴⁵Chandler, 95.

¹⁴⁶*Ibid.*, 161.

¹⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 85.

an architectural form which embodied the very qualities of the furniture he himself had collected and admired.

Fireplaces and Dutch Tiles

Chandler noted that the "the heart of the house toward which visitors at once turn on entering, when that feature is in use, is the fireplace."¹⁴⁸ In 1750 Isaac Ware wrote a similar comment regarding the fireplace, "With us no article in a well-furnished room is more essential. The eye immediately falls upon it on entering the room, and the place for sitting down is naturally near it. By this means it becomes the most prominent thing in the furnishing of the room."¹⁴⁹ Chandler, like Ware, considered the fireplace an "indispensable" feature of the home.¹⁵⁰ At Dunstable Farms, Chandler restored the open hearth fireplaces by removing nineteenth-century parlor stoves, fire frames and applied covers (figs. 22 and 23).

For Chandler, the fireplace may have represented a feature which recalled earlier days and set a mood of security and charm within the house. In 1923 Wallace Nutting picturesquely described an evening close to the fire:

A sweet almost sacred stillness falls. We are unfolded in the kindly curtain of the night. The embers glow in the waning light and the dancing shadows liven all the great room with odd figures... We need little and we have much.... The wood pile is ample and the old apple logs give

¹⁴⁸Chandler, 43 .

¹⁴⁹Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, 72.

¹⁵⁰Chandler, 43.

us abundant heat. We do not lock the doors. It is time to wind the tall clock, cover the embers and go up the old winding stairs to the square chamber." ¹⁵¹

Mary Northend also sentimentalized the fireplace by commenting that "surely there is nothing more homelike than the warm glow of blazing logs, and it is a delight to sit before the sputtering flames, and enjoy the warmth and glow, as did our ancestors in the long ago."¹⁵² Evoking the qualities which were represented in the hearth must have been essential in Chandler's formulation of a "colonial" atmosphere.

During the nineteenth century the fireplace became an immensely symbolic element within the home. A late nineteenth-century mantle manufacturer presented these comments in an advertisement, "We find in the fireplace the symbolic three virtues: illumination, warmth, and purification, a place of fires and also an altar, an altar for refuge and love."¹⁵³ Romantic American poets such as Ralph Waldo Emerson praised the comfort of the family fireplace and included the hearth within their portrayals of the domestic scene. Chandler quoted these lines from Emerson's "The Snow-Storm" in the introduction of *The Colonial House* :

Announced by all the trumpets of the sky
Arrives the snow; and driving o'er the fields, ...
And veils the farmhouse at the garden's end.
The sled and traveler stopped, the courier's feet
Delayed, all friends shut out, the housemates
Around the radiant fireplace, enclosed

¹⁵¹ Nutting, 257.

¹⁵² Northend, *Colonial Homes and their Furnishings*, 78.

¹⁵³ Rossano, 74.

in the tumultuous privacy of the storm.¹⁵⁴

In "Snowbound" John Greenleaf Whittier, a poet Chandler also admired, presented his romantic interpretation of the eighteenth century fireplace:

We watched the first blaze appear,
Heard the sharp crackle, caught the gleam
On whitewashed wall and sagging beam,
Until the old, rude-furnished room
Burst flower-like, into rosy bloom.¹⁵⁵

Chandler appreciated the associations of the fireplace and chose to focus on this feature in his projects.

Chandler introduced tiles to the fireplace surrounds of several of his restorations, such as the Winslow House in Plymouth.¹⁵⁶ He wrote in *The Colonial House*, "One of these tiled fireplaces in the original old blue or mulberry color on the gray-white of the old Dutch tiles makes an extremely pleasing feature for a rendering of the fireplace...."¹⁵⁷ Early photographs suggest that Dutch tiles were not used to decorate the original fireplaces of Dunstable Farms. Chandler purchased tiles in England and applied them to all all but one of the fireplaces in the house. Tiles not only function as decorative embellishments, but they portray tales and sentimentalized stories. To an active antiquarian such as Dolan, tiles, like pewter, china and jugs represented evocative bits of nostalgia worthy of collection and display to make complete the idealized setting of the revered hearth.

¹⁵⁴Chandler, 6.

¹⁵⁵John Greenleaf Whittier, *Snow-Bound: A Winter Idyl* (Boston:Ticknor and Fields, 1866) 17.

¹⁵⁶Ruth Hall, Interview with author, 4 January 1992.

¹⁵⁷Chandler, 122.

The Dining Room from the Metropolitan Museum

Photographs confirm that the long room on the north side of the house which Ida Butterfield described as "a kitchen" contained little woodwork at the time Dolan acquired the house. Butterfield commented that the space had been a workroom for many years.¹⁵⁸ Chandler extensively embellished this room by replicating the woodwork of the Newington, Connecticut Room from the Metropolitan Museum. This probably was a design idea which immensely appealed to Dolan, because like the curators of the Metropolitan Museum, Chandler was creating a credible period room setting to display a variety of collected antiques (figs. 24, 25, 26, & 27).

In *The Colonial House*, Chandler expressed his appreciation of the Newington Room. He commented that "there was an exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts during the Hudson-Fulton Exposition, a portion of a very beautiful room from Connecticut, showing great individuality of treatment in this material (white pine), the wood having taken, in the course of long years, a beautiful soft reddish-brown color, difficult to describe."¹⁵⁹

Recently, Elizabeth Stillinger asserted that curator, Henry Watson Kent, "brought early American decorative arts to public notice dramatically with the exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum during the Hudson-Fulton Celebration of 1909."¹⁶⁰ She also remarked that the event represented "the

¹⁵⁸Gates, 12.

¹⁵⁹Chandler, 123.

¹⁶⁰Stillinger, 160.

first comprehensive and well organized exhibit of American antiques." ¹⁶¹ Because the Newington paneling was the authentic backdrop for this apparently ground breaking exhibit, the room must have received a great deal of attention.

R.T.H. Halsey, who was a consulting curator for the Hudson-Fulton exhibit, commented on the origins of the design, "The builder has tried to do something more effective than mere beveling and has produced charming arched panels of a Queen Anne style.... The crossed stiles at the bottom, as well as the pilasters flanking the fireplace with the carved flowers at the top, are typical of the Connecticut River Valley in the middle of the eighteenth century."¹⁶² Chandler was obviously not bothered that this design type was of an earlier period and typical of a Connecticut rather than Massachusetts house. The woodwork's aesthetic appeal, as well as its ability to evoke a particular atmosphere, were for Chandler probably far more admirable qualities than the installation's historical accuracy.

Chandler and Dolan may have been charmed by the lore associated with this example. Chandler wrote that "the panels of the lower wainscoting on either side of the mantel in this case were of the 'cross-paneling' type used on what was called the 'witch door.'"¹⁶³ Chandler loved this form of design which is evident in the lower wainscoting and doors of the Newington Room as well as in the original central door

¹⁶¹*Ibid.*, 129.

¹⁶²Halsey, 43.

¹⁶³Chandler, 123.

of the Winslow House in Plymouth, Massachusetts. He commented that the cross paneled design "was supposed to protect the inhabitants from the influence of witchcraft."¹⁶⁴ He also noted that the craftsmen "picturesquely adjusted" this form by arching the triangular panels at the top.¹⁶⁵

For Dolan's china collection Chandler installed a corner cupboard; the design of which also originated from the Newington Room (fig. 28). Chandler wrote, "a picturesque and useful feature in houses of the second period, apparently pretty general in those of much note, was the dining room cupboard, which was useful as well as ornamental. It was usually built with a curving back and domed top, the dome being filled... with a shell-top attractively carved."¹⁶⁶

Chandler also added three windows to the dining room. Ida Butterfield pointed out that the room had originally only two window openings. Chandler's alteration provided more light in a space which Ida Butterfield described as, "the least pleasant of all" in the house.¹⁶⁷ Clearly in Chandler's eyes this room necessitated an extensive remodeling. After Chandler completed the alterations to the house, Dolan would display a collection of pewter, jugs, a trestle table and ladder back chairs in the dining room. At the time Dolan may have believed that this collection would not have been complete without the contributions of architecture to convey both the qualities of the picturesque and the academic.

¹⁶⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵*Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 131.

¹⁶⁷Gates., 12.

The Application of Woodwork in the House

Chandler praised the work of colonial craftsmen and the materials which they incorporated into their designs. He noted in *The White Pine Series* that "the fact that so many of the older buildings have remained in good condition until this day, without any pain at all, is extraordinary testimony to the durability of the materials used in their construction."¹⁶⁸ William Rhoads commented that "Joseph Everett Chandler thought the fine workmanship of Colonial buildings resulted from the fact that their builders 'loved' their work in a way that union labor never could."¹⁶⁹

Chandler, because he admired the qualities of fine wood, maintained most of the original paneling in the house. Chandler's treatment of the library woodwork is fairly representative of his approach to the rest of the house. In this room, Chandler left the original fireplace wall paneling but he replaced the chair rail with a more decorative wainscoted example typical of an earlier period. An early twentieth-century photograph suggests that the library mantle wall was originally grained; a common decorative surface treatment during the nineteenth century. Chandler applied a varnish to the wood which darkened the surface as well as obscured the original graining (figs 29 & 30). Chandler believed that graining was "a past time readily overdone; not

¹⁶⁸Chandler, *White Pine Series*, "Colonial Cottages", 3.

¹⁶⁹Rhoads, 391.

easy too condone."¹⁷⁰

Chandler described the "honest and respectable" colonial interior in this manner: "The inside walls were usually plastered..; and as most of the early work was unpainted and left to darken with age, the flooring only being sanded or scrubbed, the combination of color was indescribably warm, rich and satisfying, and completed most rooms of excellent structural design."¹⁷¹ Chandler could evoke an environment of warmth and perceived "colonial character" by varnishing rather than painting the library fireplace wall and staining the wooden floors of the house a deep brown tone.

Chandler added a summer beam, a chimney girt and bearers to the library. He wrote romantically of these structural features, which at Dunstable Farms were probably originally intended to lie unexposed beneath the plaster. Referring to framing parts from houses of an earlier period he wrote, "The wonderful posts, summers and girts... having been cut from the owner's surrounding acres and lovingly adzed by a woodsman with ancient looking tools, into marvels of honest roughness and captivating beauty."¹⁷² Although in this instance Chandler praised the work of the early "woodsman" it is particularly interesting that Chandler chose not to expose the original structural members at Dunstable Farms. It is likely that the farmhouse's original framing pieces hidden below the plaster may have been far too simple and uneven to appeal to Chandler. To solve this aesthetic issue and add

¹⁷⁰Chandler, *The Colonial House*, 105.

¹⁷¹Chandler, *White Pine Series*, "Colonial Cottages," 3.

¹⁷²Chandler, *The Colonial House*, 100.

"charm" to many of the rooms, he introduced beams with decorative beading which were probably far more elaborate and cleaner cut than the original members.

Dolan had a large collection of antiquarian books and requested that Chandler design ample shelving for his collection. Chandler added bookshelves in many rooms of the house; this introduced more wood into the interior. The sturdy bookshelves blended well with Dolan's furniture examples. Chandler believed that books located "everywhere give a comfortable home-look..." ¹⁷³

The Library and Study for the Display of Antiquarian Books

Chandler designed extensive shelving in two rooms of the house; the study and the library (fig. 31). Dolan placed his collection of English literary series in the library and his first editions of American literature in the study.¹⁷⁴ From Ida Butterfield's description it is clear that the room which was designed as a study for Dolan originally functioned as a bedroom during the Butterfield occupancy. In the small room, which measures only eight by ten feet, Chandler designed bookshelves on all four walls. Although a study or a library never existed in the original farmhouse design, they were probably considered essential in this remodeling. A study and library provided a place for Dolan to work, read and display his hobby. Chandler noted that "books are the only valued

¹⁷³*Ibid.*, 44.

¹⁷⁴Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 20 March 1992.

rarities one may 'collect' without appearing to have a 'collection'." ¹⁷⁵

Books were important and apparently subtle indicators of good taste in the early twentieth century. Ellen M. Rosenthal recently commented that even prior to the colonial revival, "art on display suggested an awareness of culture; books reflected intellectual concerns; souvenirs of trips abroad bespoke worldliness; expensive fabrics and fine woodwork were tokens of material success."¹⁷⁶ She also noted that during the late nineteenth century "there seemed to be no object too obscure to be invested with symbolic meaning."¹⁷⁷ The bookshelves in Dolan's study and library may have been designed not only to store the fruits of Dolan's antiquarian book collecting, but to display his solid "intellectual concerns."

Chandler wrote, "The study is a room of which much can be made, and as it is a room for work, a north or northwest exposure agreeable on account of the light in this position being better for the eyes."¹⁷⁸ The room has a northwest exposure, planned perhaps in this area of the house following the architect's prescription. Chandler also noted that "bookcases, running to the ceiling if possible, and filled with the heterogeneous collection one accumulates today... form decidedly the most agreeable furnishings... that can be found for any room."¹⁷⁹ It is interesting that Chandler

¹⁷⁵Chandler, *The Colonial House*, 19.

¹⁷⁶Rossano, 74

¹⁷⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁷⁸Chandler, *The Colonial House*, 44.

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 45

viewed bookcases as furnishings rather than as architectural elements. Chandler, in his designs for the front stairhall, shell cupboard and bookshelves assumed the mastery of the cabinet-maker as well as the architect. His designs in many ways embody the very qualities which are cherished in pieces of early American furniture.

Conclusion

A well known early twentieth-century Hartford collector, Henry Wood Erving, once wrote that "one lacking imagination should never undertake collecting."¹⁸⁰ Erving also commented that the collector "best enjoys his valued pieces, who can see reflected in his mirrors the faces of former possessors, and can recreate the people of olden time sitting in his chairs, at his desks, and before his andirons."¹⁸¹ Chandler skillfully created an entire environment for Henry F. R. Dolan where one could imagine the past. In the early twentieth century, the elements Chandler designed were perceived as important ingredients in the formulation of the correct colonial atmosphere, and imagination was necessary to appreciate the work of the colonial revivalist.

Chandler and Dolan believed Dunstable Farms had to be altered, not only with modern conveniences, but aesthetic improvements such as white paint, piazzas, an elaborate doorframe, extensive interior woodwork and extremely early furnishings. These aesthetic changes made the farmhouse as

¹⁸⁰Stillinger, 87.

¹⁸¹*Ibid.*

Elizabeth Dolan, Harry F.R. Dolan's daughter, described in a recent interview, "authentic, livable and lived-in."¹⁸² Although these alterations were not authentic, they represented imagined colonial characteristics to an early twentieth century audience.

Elizabeth Dolan also discussed her father's approach to the remodeling: "the first thing for Dad was to get the house done properly; the way it would have been, and then add some good furnishings."¹⁸³ Her father wished to have his farm look the way he and his contemporaries believed it should have looked. These ideas are expressed in Ellen M. Rosenthal's recent discussion of the early twentieth-century remodeling of Pennypacker Mills in Schwenksville, Pennsylvania.

He [Samuel Pennypacker] sought to craft a self-statement using a vocabulary that would be familiar to his contemporaries...At the time of remodeling which created Pennypacker Mills, white Georgian houses and churches said 'Colonial ! ' much more loudly than broken-down farmhouses. In any case, Pennypacker did not want to be associated with a working farm. Rather he wished to be viewed as a wealthy, powerful gentleman farmer. The new Georgian facade made it clear that he was a man of position and refinement. I am sure that Pennypacker's contemporaries were not puzzled by his actions nor confused by the remodeled Pennypacker Mills as we are. They read the message easily. Indeed, they would have been surprised if Pennypacker had chosen to leave the farmhouse as it was."¹⁸⁴

In the early years of the twentieth century, many people were searching for, buying, and fixing up farmhouses all over New England. Popular literature and periodicals

¹⁸²Elizabeth Dolan, Interview with author, 20 March 1992.

¹⁸³Ibid.

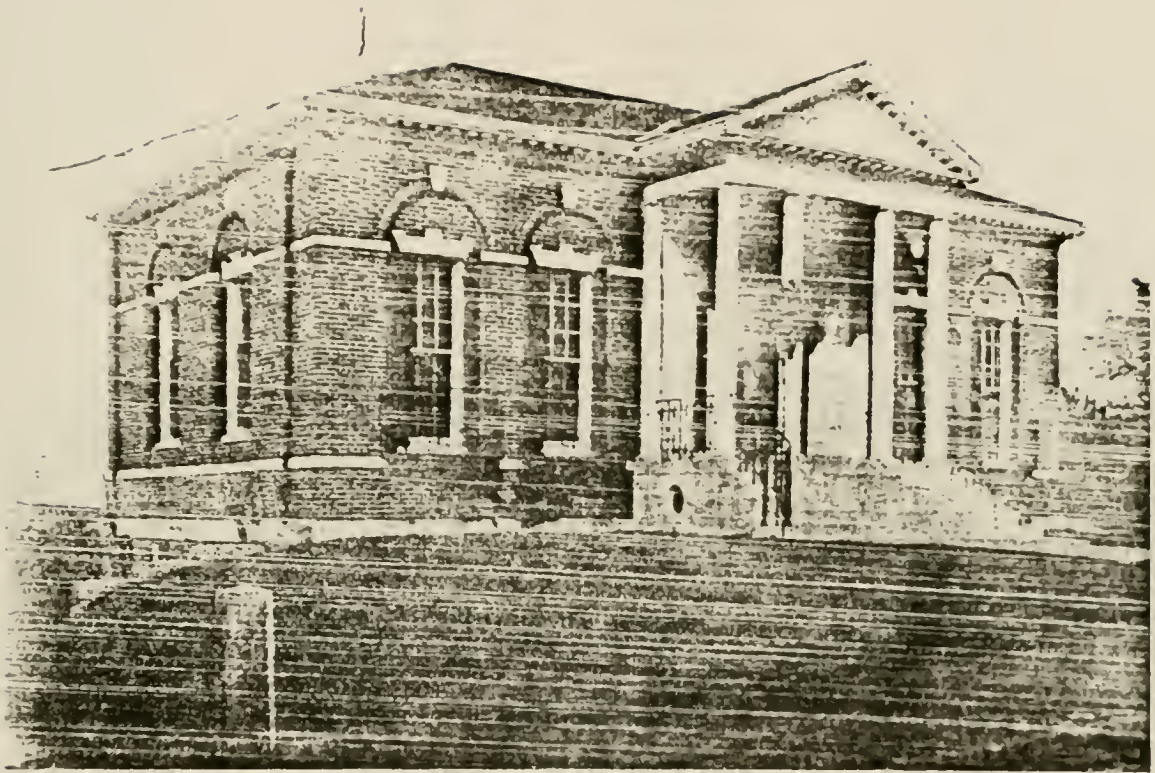
¹⁸⁴Rossano, 75.

embraced these farms as the most ideal settings for enjoying country life and displaying "old-time" furnishing. Dolan's passion for collecting and re-doing the simple farm was a hobby shared by many at the time. What is remarkable about this particular project, however, was the approach. Dolan allowed only two pieces of furniture in his home which were manufactured after the construction date of the farmhouse, a grand piano and an Edison machine. During the holidays Dolan insisted that the family Christmas tree be hidden in the nineteenth-century servants' ell, because "it didn't belong at the farm." Every effort was made to strictly convey what was understood then as "correctly colonial."¹⁸⁵

Dolan exhausted a large amount of energy and over a quarter of a million dollars collecting the furnishings for Dunstable Farms and hiring a renowned authority in the field of colonial architecture to ensure that the house and grounds would be "made to represent the best in such a country house in the days when it was built...."¹⁸⁶ The mere fact that this man would go to such great lengths to achieve a desirable colonial environment is a testament to the omnipotence of the colonial revival movement.

¹⁸⁵Elizabeth Dolan. Interview with author, 20 March 1992.

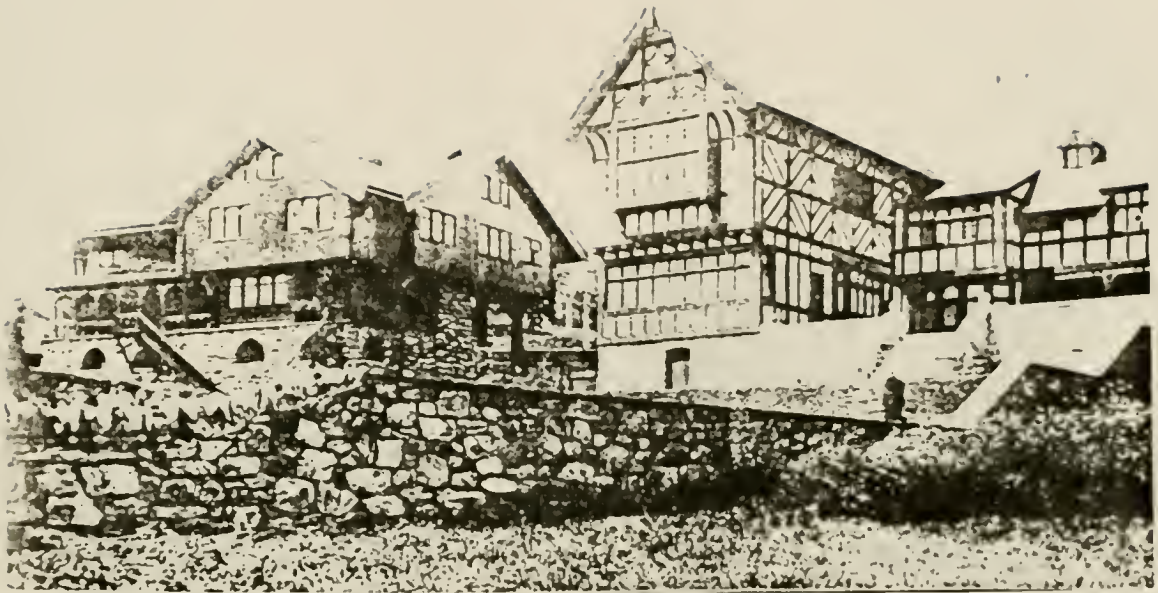
¹⁸⁶Elizabeth Dolan. Interview with author, 20 March 1992. Harvard University. *Harvard College Class of 1900 50th Anniversary Report*, 1950, Cambridge, MA., 203.



1 The Frederick Adams Library, Kingston, MA., designed by Joseph Everett Chandler, 1898.



2 The Blanchard Residence, Brookline, MA., designed by Joseph Everett Chandler, 1899.



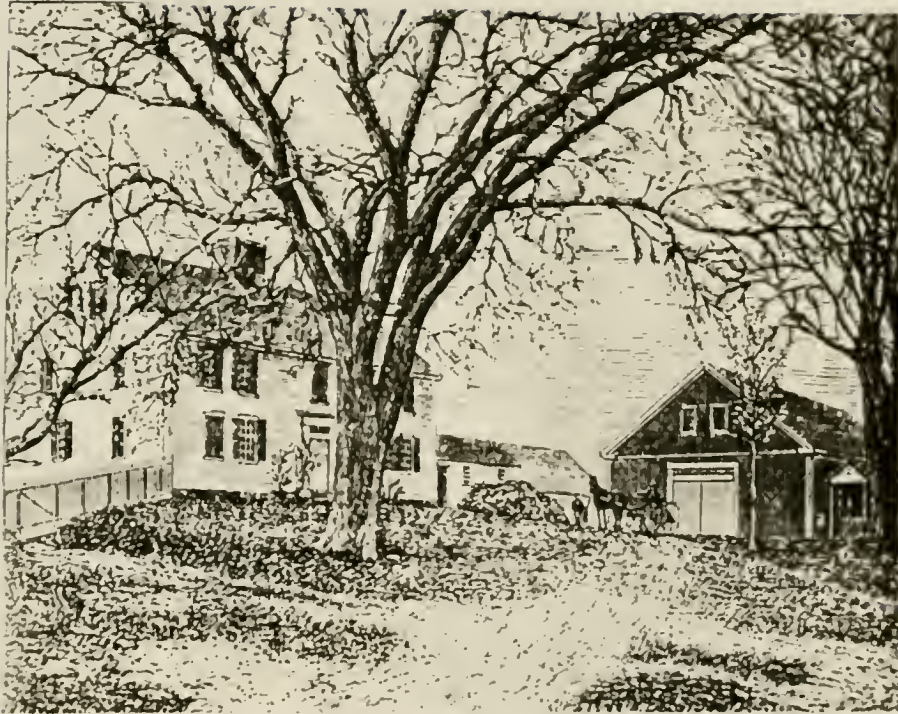
3 The Garden Fronts of the Ransvott and Sharpe Residences Chestnut Hill, MA., designed by Joseph Everett Chandler, 1903.



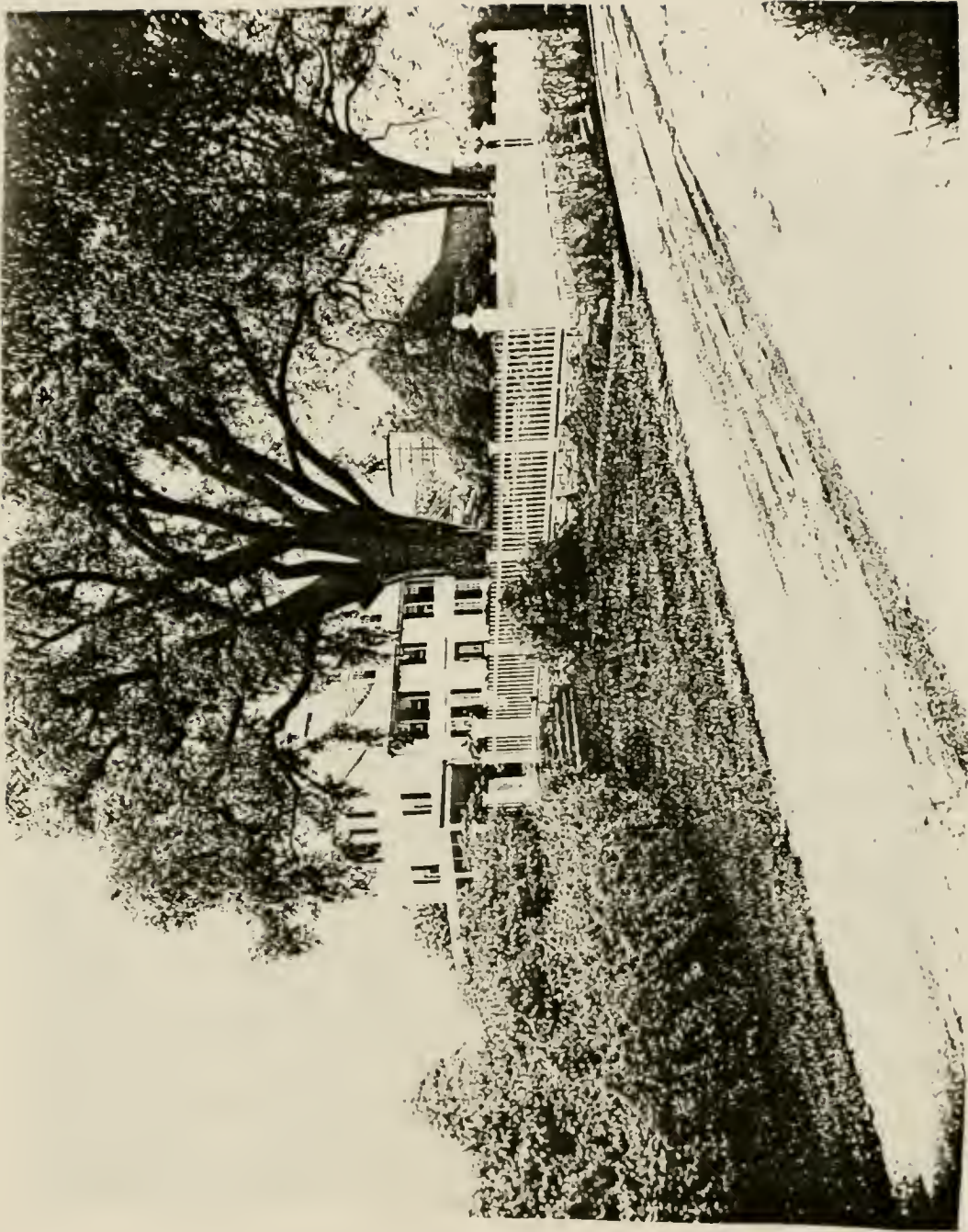
4 The Front Facade of the Sharpe Residence.



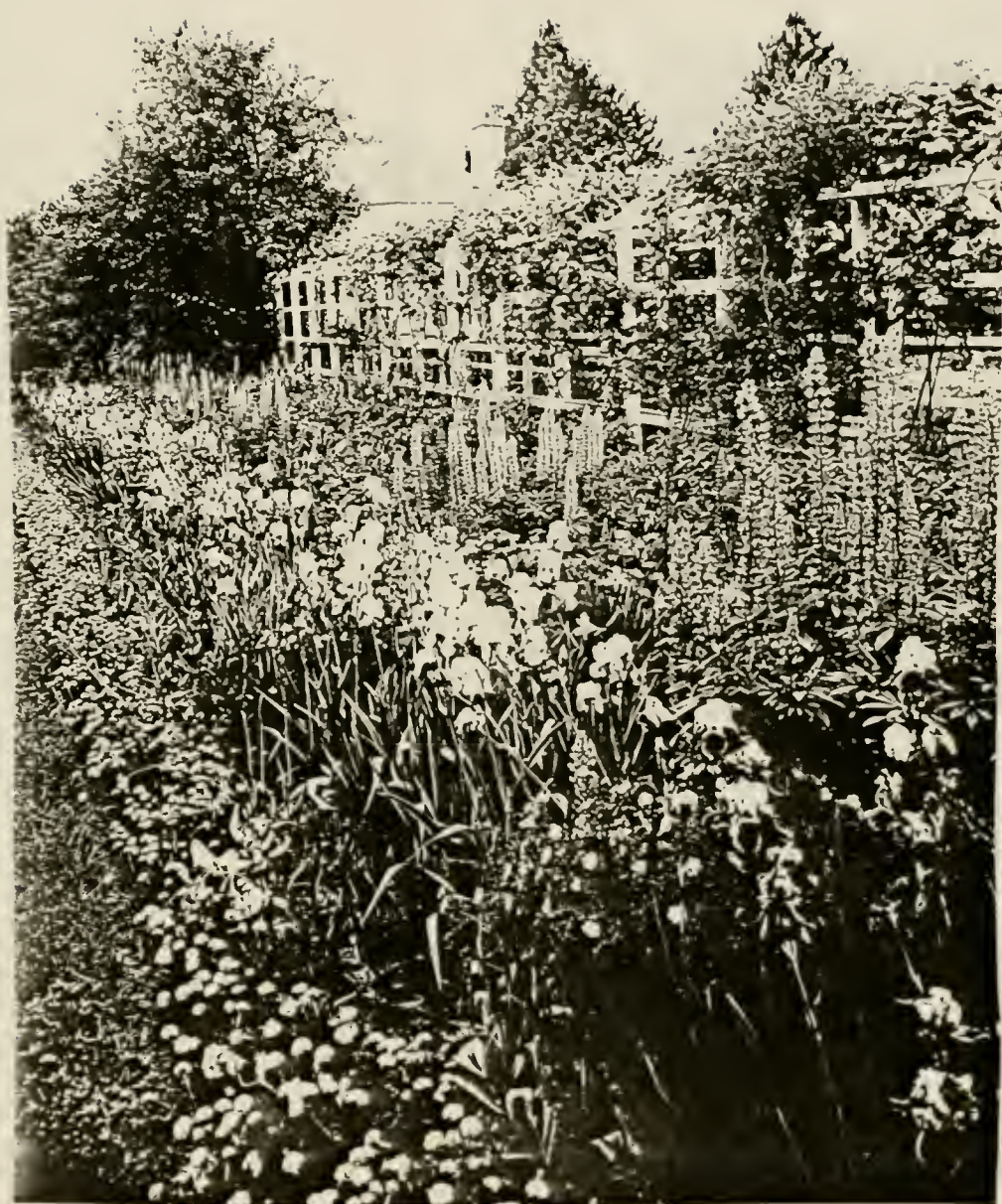
5 Dunstable Farms, ca. 1918.



6 Homestead of Dexter Butterfield, ca. 1877.



7 Dunstable Farms, ca. 1950.

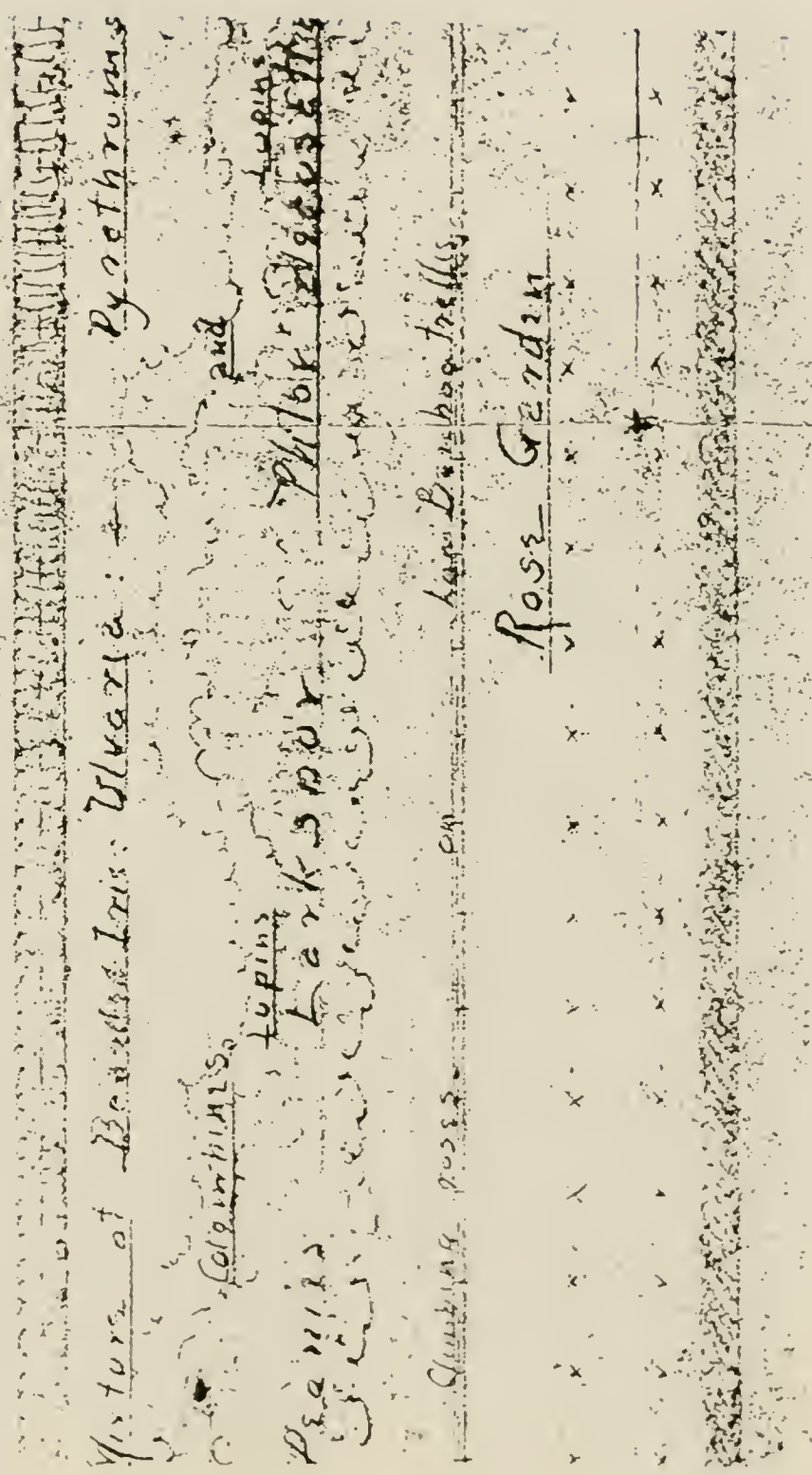


8 Flower Garden, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1950.

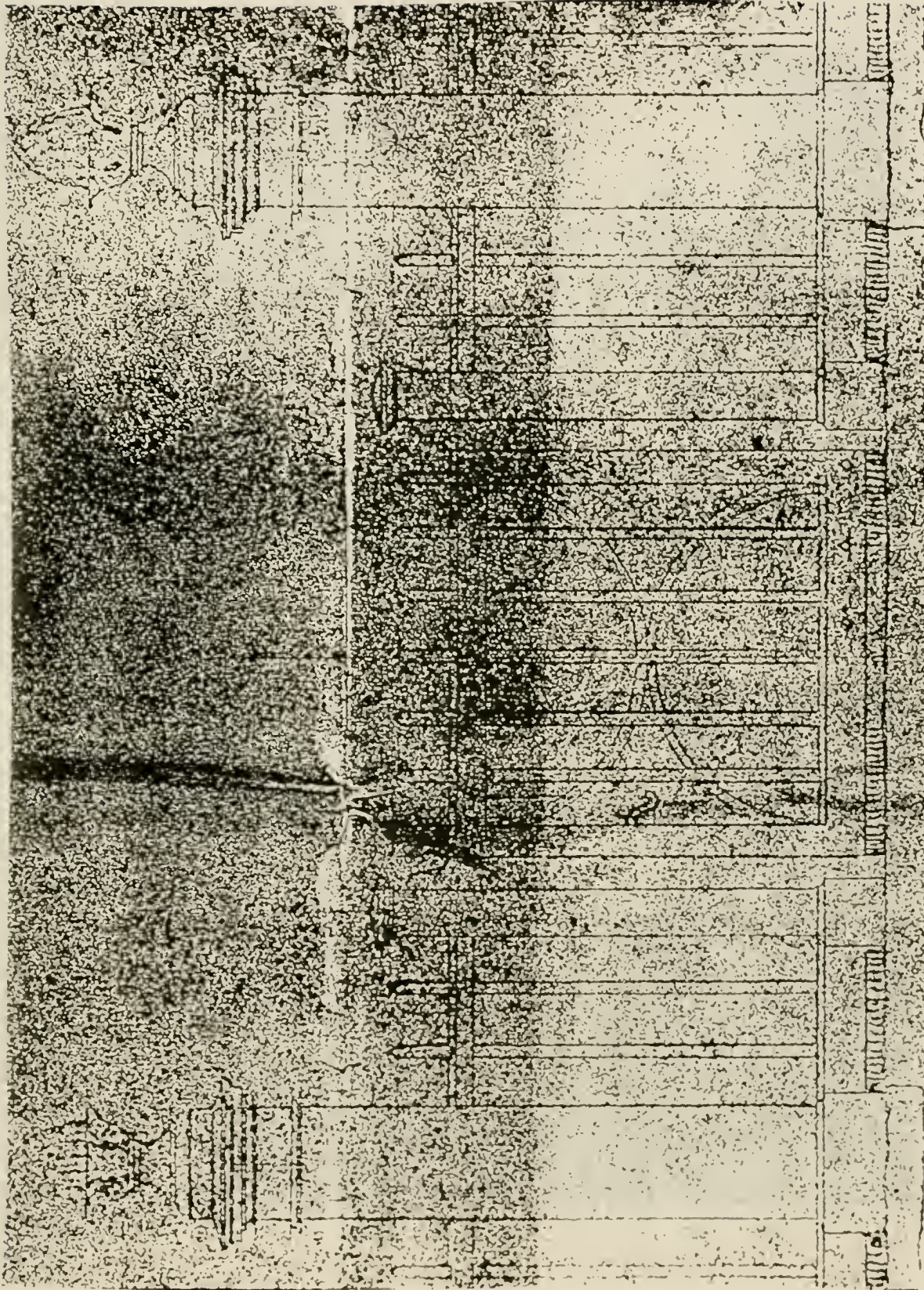


9 Flower Garden with Well House, ca. 1950.

Mani Gress walk border
 plants
 (12.0)



10 Detail of "Planting Scheme for a Portion of the Garden." Dunstable Farms, Joseph Everett Chandler, October 31, 1923.



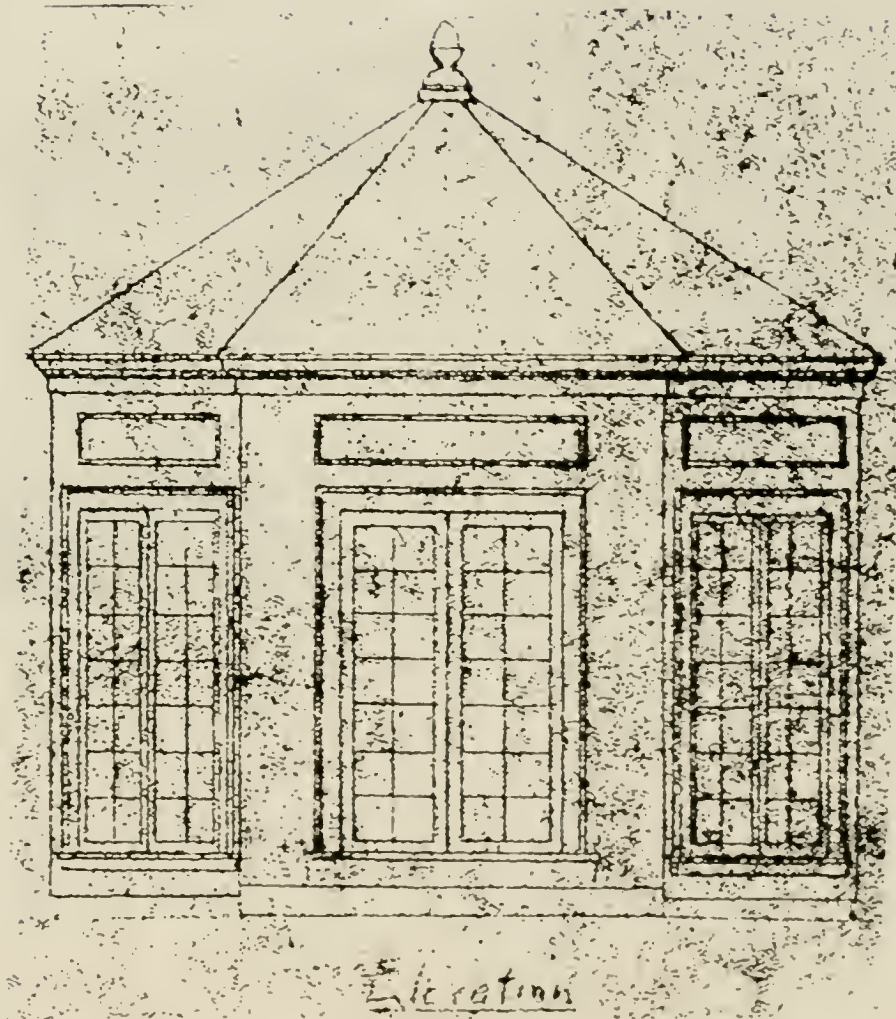
11 Detail of "Drawing of Fence of White Pine, Painted." Dunstable Farms, Joseph Everett Chandler, August 28 1923. Reproduction poor because drawing in bad condition, please see figure 12.



12 South Facade, Dunstable Farms, 1991.



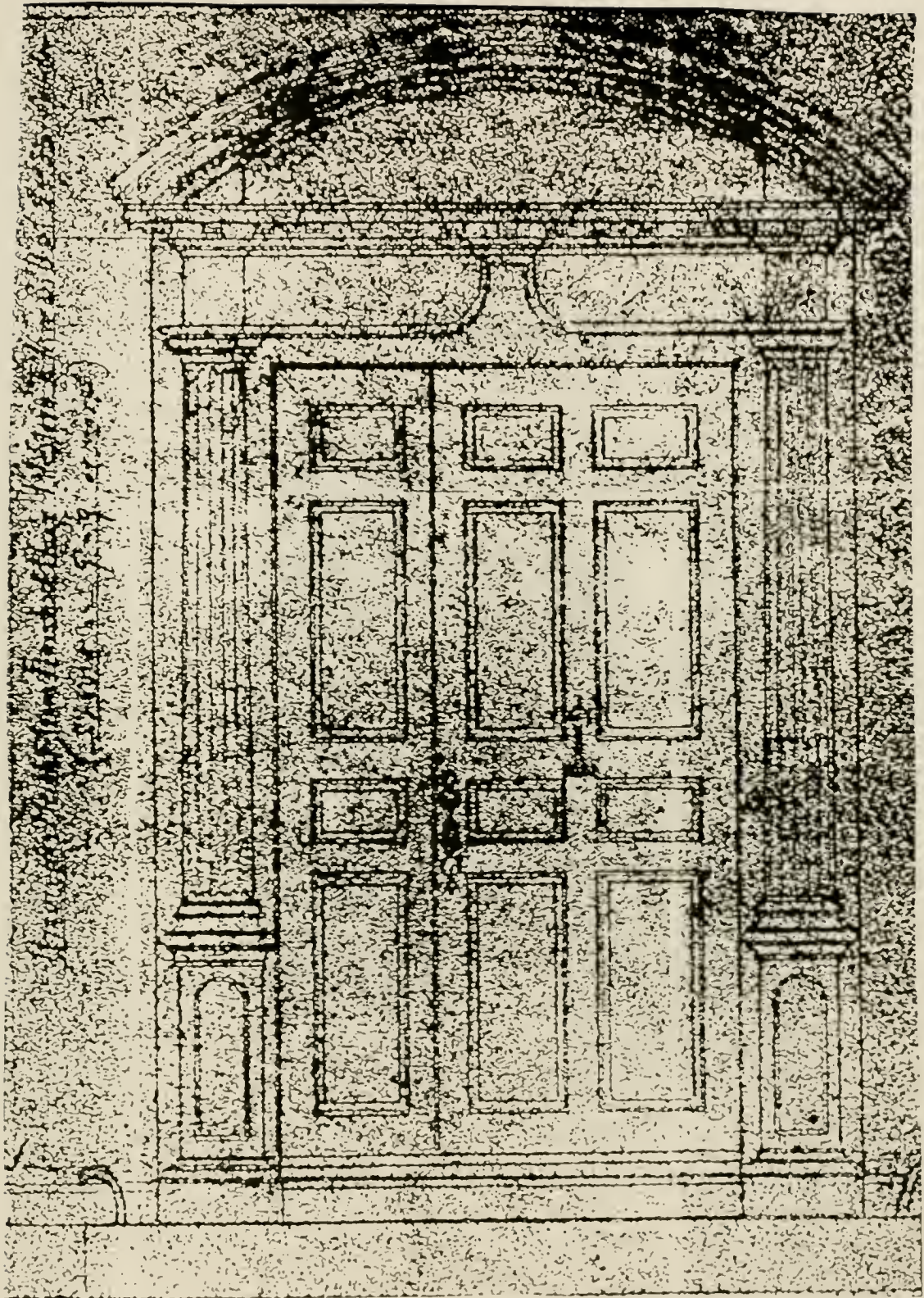
13 Summer House, Dunstable Farms, 1991.



14 Detail of "Octagonal Summer House for Harry F. R. Dolan,"
Dunstable Farms. Joseph Everett Chandler, October 1926.



15 Dunstable Farms, ca. 1918.



16 Detail of "Study for the Front Entrance Door," Dunstable Farms. Joseph Everett Chandler, n.d.



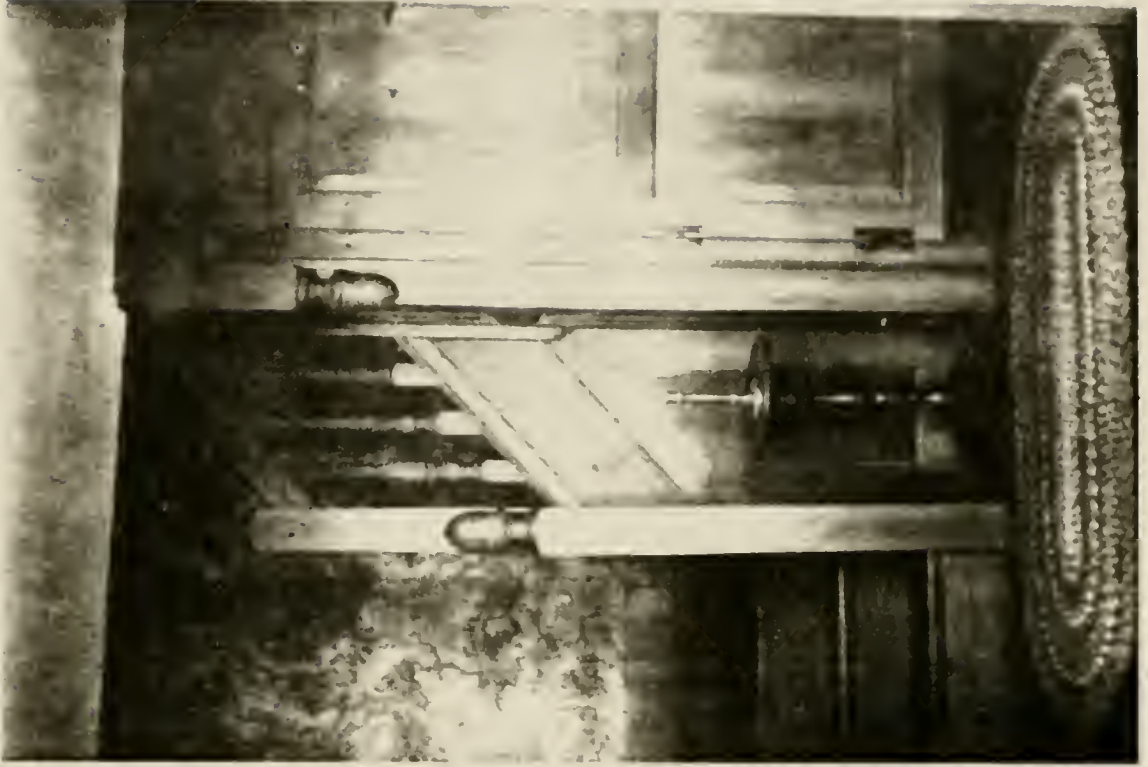
17 Front Entrance Door, Dunstable Farms, 1991.



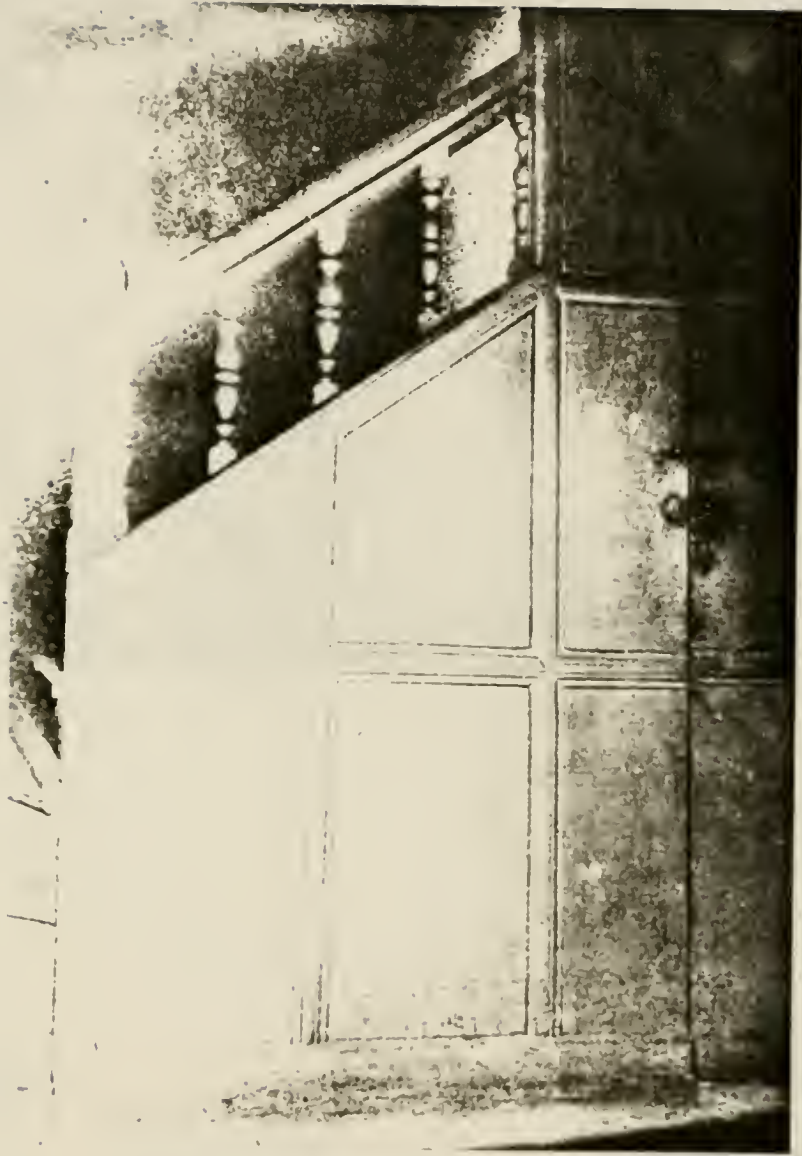
18 Front Entrance Door, Carreth House, Amherst, NH.



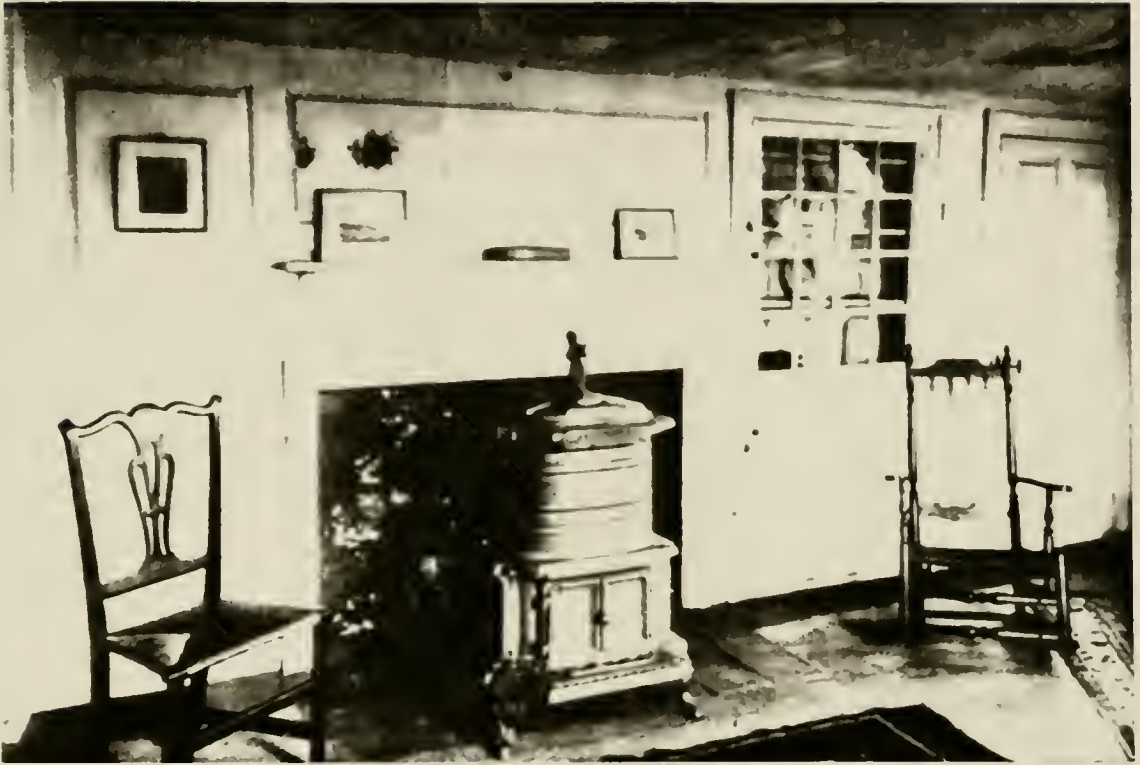
19 Front Stair, Dunstable Farms, ca, 1918.



20 Front Stair, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1924.



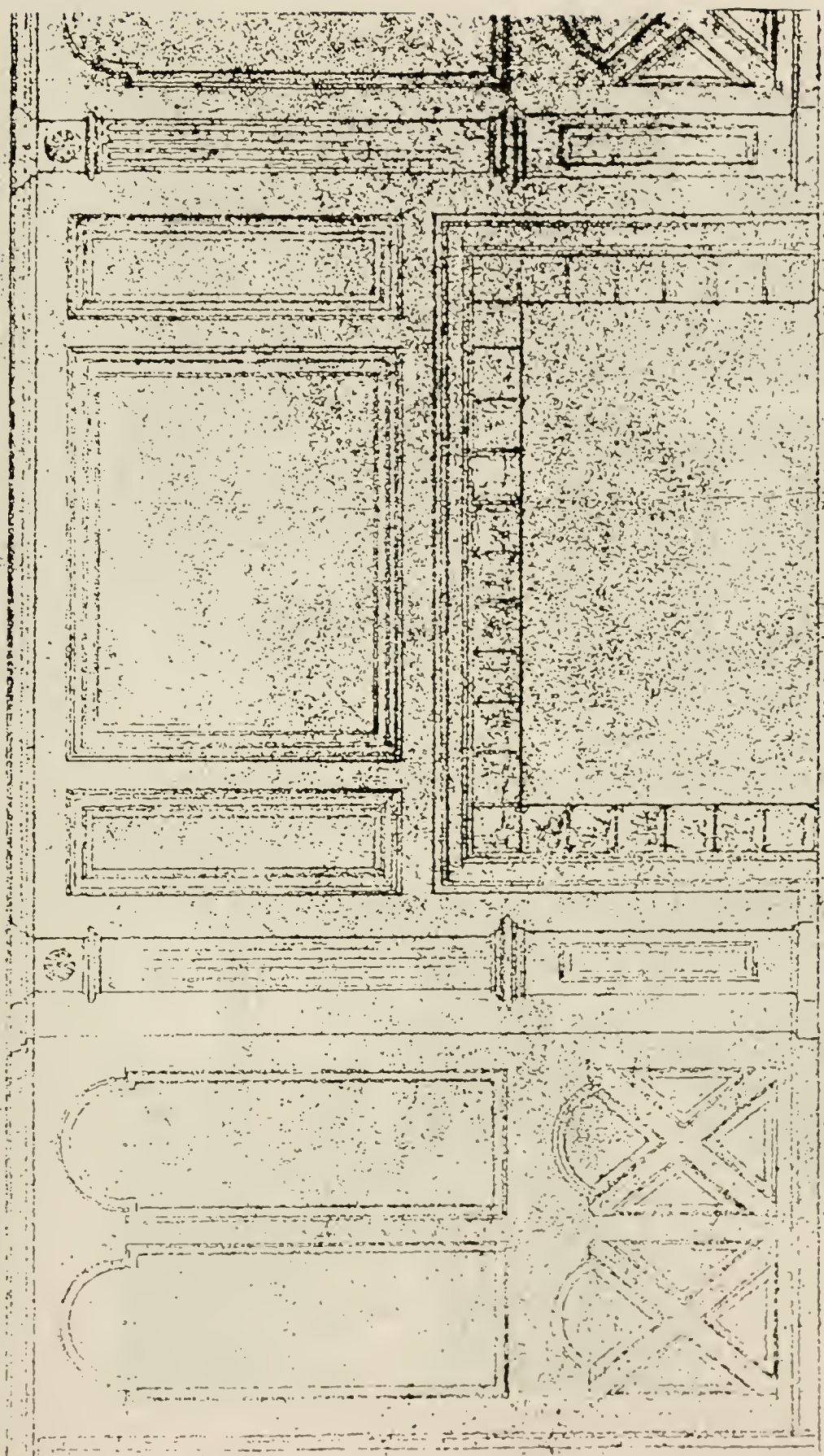
21 Front Stair Hall, Beniah Titcomb House, Newburyport, MA.



22 Living Room, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1918.



23 Living Room, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1924.



Fireplace side of Dining Room at Dunstable Farms

Scale 3/4" = 1'-11"

24 Detail of "Fireplace Side of Dining Room at Dunstable Farms." Joseph Everett Chandler, n.d.



25 Dining Room, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1918.



26 Dining Room, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1924.



27 A Room from Newington, Connecticut. Metropolitan Museum of Art.



28 Corner Cupboard, Dining Room, Dunstable Farms, 1991.



29 Fireplace Wall, Library, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1918.



30 Fireplace Wall, Library, Dunstable Farms, 1991.



31 Northwest Corner of the Study, Dunstable Farms, ca. 1924.

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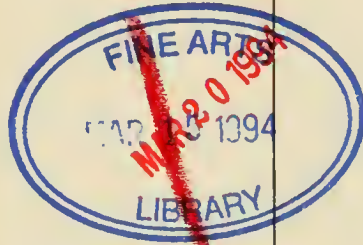
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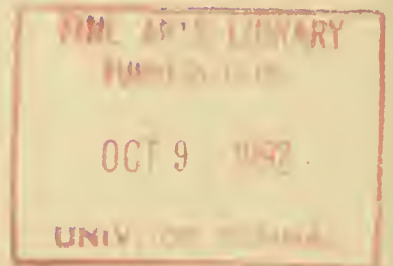
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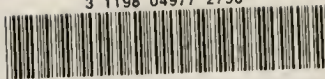
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